PICTURESQUE AUSTRALASIA

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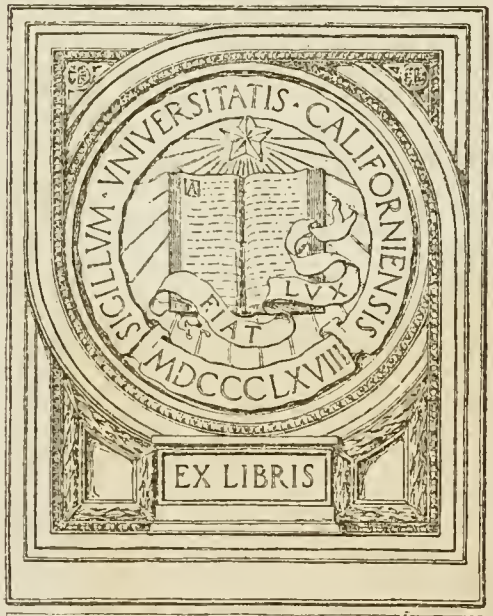

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THE DESCENT TO THE DARGO.

CASSELL'S

PICTURESQUE AUSTRALASIA.

EDITED BY

E. E. MORRIS, M.A. Oxon.,

PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH, ETC., IN MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY.

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MOUNT KOSCIUSKO.

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THE AUSTRALIAN ALPS.

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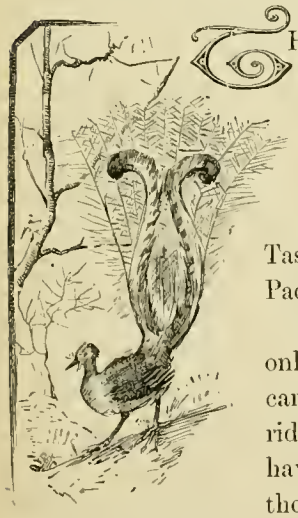


THE Australian Alps are the southern extremity of a chain of mountains which, from the north-east of Queensland, can be traced in lines running, more or less parallel to the east coast, through the whole length of the continent, until they disappear into Bass Straits in the southernmost headlands of Gippsland, to re-appear again in the north-east corner of Tasmania, and be finally lost in the depths of the great South Pacific Ocean.

This chain, in the northern part of the continent, is frequently only represented by high table-lands, the result of mighty volcanic overflows, with here and there abrupt hills or short steep ridges rising out of the surrounding plateaux. Multifarious names have been given to this chain, which has as many *aliases* as the greatest criminal in the land, and it is not until it reaches Mount Kosciusko that it assumes the pretentious title of "the Alps."

Mount Kosciusko lies only a few miles to the east of the head of the Murray River, which marks the division between New South Wales and Victoria. Save the Pilot, it is the only mountain of note in this chain which lies in New South Wales, so that almost the whole of the Alps, and all the principal peaks and ridges, with these exceptions, are situated in the north-east region of Victoria and in Gippsland.

The Alps and their numerous spurs cover a very large tract of country, which lies between the parallels 37° 25′ and 38° south latitude, and between the meridians 147° and 149° east longitude. Within this area are situate all the highest peaks in the continent, and amongst their snow-capped summits is to be seen some of the grandest and most magnificent mountain scenery in the world. Their general conformation is not that of a single ridge, nor of several ridges, but may be described as consisting of huge conical peaks, with here and there serrated ridges rising precipitously out of high table-lands, many of these plateaux being of large extent and at very high elevations, and descending either in gradual slopes or in successive terraces, to form low gaps, over which routes become capable through what would otherwise be an almost impassable country.

These plateaux consist chiefly of a rich volcanic soil, which is highly productive, and they are very valuable for both agricultural and pastoral purposes. Amongst these plains, as they are called, which range between 5,000 and 2,000 feet above the level of the sea, most of the rivers take their rise, flowing southward through Gippsland, and emptying themselves into the South Pacific Ocean, or northward through the north-east district of Victoria, and falling into the Murray.

The general surface formation of the hills is extremely rough and broken, densely wooded up to about the 4,000 feet level, especially on the southern slopes, which are more rugged and serrated than the northern, owing probably to the erosive influence of the south and south-westerly winds, which, charged with moisture, blow in off the sea. From the same cause, the scrubs grow so thick as to be almost impenetrable. Above the level of 4,000 feet a small species of stunted gum, called snow-gum, grows between the rocks—huge masses of granite and porphyry, for the most part bare of all vegetation, but sometimes covered with a thin layer of soil, on which mosses, lichens, and snow-grasses flourish during the summer months.

Before scaling the precipitous side of Kosciusko or of Hotham, there are many places of interest and beauty in the outlying spurs to be seen. Chief among these is the town of Beechworth, situated at an altitude of 1,700 feet, surrounded on every side by hills, itself built on the sides and summits of two spurs, between which lies a deep valley. Down the valley, a small creek, called Reid's Creek, sparkling and glistening in the sunlight, rushes with great rapidity, passing through a deep gorge, and disappearing round the base of a hill about a mile below the town, to re-appear again and again as it follows its winding course towards the Ovens River, of which it is an affluent.

Early in the fifties Beechworth was not, but where the town of to-day stands the "May Day Hills" homestead had its place, and sheep and cattle browsed along the verdant slopes of the hills, or quenched their thirst in the cool valley, whilst the only

sounds which disturbed the silence of the primeval forest were the bleatings of sheep, or the lowing of kine, or the occasional crack of a stock-whip.

Suddenly, as by the touch of a magic wand, a city of canvas sprang into existence, and the echoes of the forest were awakened by the "chip, chip" of five thousand picks and the "rock" of five thousand cradles. The emerald sward became covered with huge heaps of unsightly yellow clay, and the silvery waters of the stream sparkled no longer, but were changed to a dull muddy brown. Gold had been discovered. The discovery was first made some little distance below Beechworth, on Mr. Reid's station, and close to his wool-shed, from which these diggings took their name of the "Wool-shed Diggings."

Prospectors, tracing up and down the bed of the creek, soon discovered two other spots which yielded rich returns, the one above the wool-shed (Beechworth) and the other below (Eldorado). This creek was one of the richest alluvial fields in Australia while it lasted. A story has come down to us illustrative of the liberality and the prodigality of the miners of those days. Wishing to return one of their own men to Parliament, their choice fell upon one Donald Cameron, a miner like themselves. Unfortunately, he did not possess the necessary qualification as a property-holder. In five minutes £2,000 was subscribed and presented to him, and after he had been returned as a member at the head of the poll, he was mounted on a horse shod with gold, and so made his entry into Beechworth, a second Sesostris. These shoes remained in the possession of a resident in the district up till a short time ago, when they were melted down and sold as bullion—a pity, as they would have been relics having much interest in future ages.

The glory of Beechworth as a mining town has at this day almost departed, though mining, both reefing and alluvial, is still to a small extent carried on. The chief workings are those of the Rocky Mountain Company, which has spent a great deal of capital in making a tunnel through the hill underneath the town. This has been completed, and gives a strong force of water, so that now the company is obtaining payable results. A few Chinamen, who live in a small village of their own on the eastern outskirts of the town, still fossick amongst the old deserted claims, making, no doubt, a good competence—that is, good for a Chinaman, though very likely it would not keep a European in board.

The town of the present day, with its nicely laid-out streets, all planted with English trees (the chief, Ford Street, running from south to north through the whole length of the town), owes its support rather to the Government institutions which it contains than to its mining wealth, or to such support as it receives from the outlying district, which is very small. There are four large public institutions, the Gaol, the Lunatic Asylum, the Benevolent Asylum, and the Hospital. All of them are fine, large, handsome structures, which are beautifully kept by those in charge of them. The other places of interest in the town are the Anglican church, from the tower of which beautiful views of the town itself and the surrounding country can be obtained; the public gardens, with their neat, trim borders and gravelled paths, while the flowers and flowering shrubs are exceedingly pretty, many of them being of rare kinds; and the Public Library and the Burke Museum. This library is one of the best out of Melbourne,

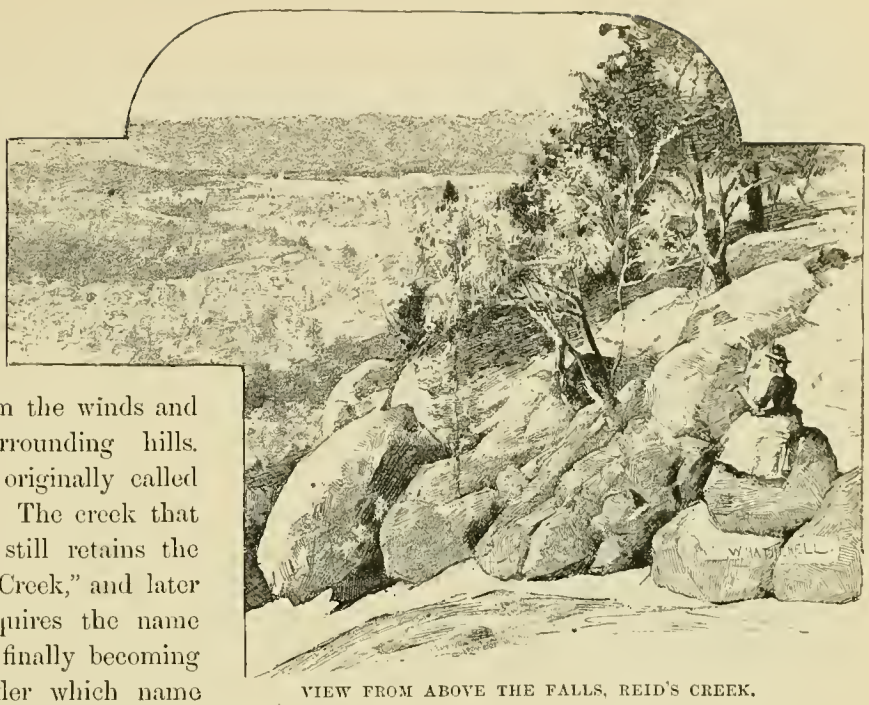
and contains about 5,000 volumes, while the museum possesses many exhibits of great interest and curiosity, being especially rich in geological specimens and in shells. It is called after the explorer O'Hara Burke, who, in conjunction with Wills, first crossed this great continent, then a *terra incognita*, from south to north. Unfortunately, on the return journey the whole expedition, with one single exception, perished wretchedly in the centre of the continent from thirst and starvation. Before Mr. Burke left with that famous but ill-fated expedition he held the appointment of police inspector at Beechworth, and afterwards at Castlemain.

Let no one leave Beechworth without ascending the One Tree Hill It is only a little hill, not many feet higher than the town itself, but the view from the summit is most beautiful. At your feet lies the pretty town, with its white granite houses and English trees—a peaceful Arcadian picture. To the left stretches a sea of hills, rising higher and higher, gradually increasing in magnitude as they recede, until they culminate in the lofty snow-capped peaks of the Bogong Mountains. The play of light and shadow, the shades of colour, the dip and rise of valley and hill, are truly lovely.

ANGLICAN CHURCH, BEECHWORTH.

Turning to your right, you follow the course of Reid's Creek, flashing in golden sprays as it plunges from rock to rock, flowing far beneath you, winding through gorge and over gap, disappearing under the base of this hill, to re-appear over the brow of that, until far down the valley it threads its course through a small flat basin, where stands all that remains of the great Wool-shed Diggings — a small hamlet, not twenty cottages in all, some of them neat and trim, with pretty, well-kept gardens surrounding them, others old and dilapidated, the broken relics of a famous past.

From the top of the hill is to be heard the splash and roar of a waterfall. These falls are some little distance down the creek, and the track leading to them is steep and even precipitous. They are between four and five hundred feet in depth, and during the winter months, when there is a fairly large volume of water flowing down the creek, they are exceedingly picturesque. Unfortunately, during the dry months of the year, owing to the small quantity of water that comes down, they lose much of their beauty.



VIEW FROM ABOVE THE FALLS, REID'S CREEK.

About six miles south-east of Beechworth stands the little village of Stanley. It is built on the slope of the Dingle range, and lies in a snug little hollow, sheltered from the winds and rain by the surrounding hills. This hollow was originally called "Snake Hollow." The creek that flows through it still retains the name of "Snake Creek," and later in its course acquires the name of Spring Creek, finally becoming Reid's Creek, under which name it passes through Beechworth.

The same cause that built Beechworth was also the reason of Stanley springing into existence. This might, in fact, be said of at least half the towns throughout the whole of the district. They would not exist if it were not for the mining industry. There is still a little mining carried on in this secluded valley, and on a calm morning you can hear the "chip" of the picks and the "grate" of the shovels at work, and the rush of the water in the sluicing-boxes.

The town is planted, as we have mentioned, with English trees, which, like all English fruits, grow here with great luxuriance; and the traveller, looking out from his window during the winter time, when the snow is falling, is forcibly reminded of old England. He sees side by side the beech and the elm, their branches bowed down with snow—for the town being 2,400 feet above the sea-level, snow very frequently falls to the depth of several inches.

Four miles to the south east Mount Stanley rears his lofty head, and the ascent of this mountain ought to be made by everyone who chances to find himself in the district. The summit is about 3,400 feet high, and, as it stands some distance above all the surrounding hills, the whole country for miles and miles around stretches like a vast panorama before the beholder. The ascent is not difficult, and for those who are not able or are too indolent to climb, it may be made on horseback, or even in a buggy. But if it is determined to do it in either of these two latter ways, it will be well to be provided with a competent guide, or the probability is that the tourist will run himself into a *cul-de-sac*, and spend hours in endeavouring to reach the top of the range. On foot, however, the ascent may be made almost direct, though in some places it is very steep.

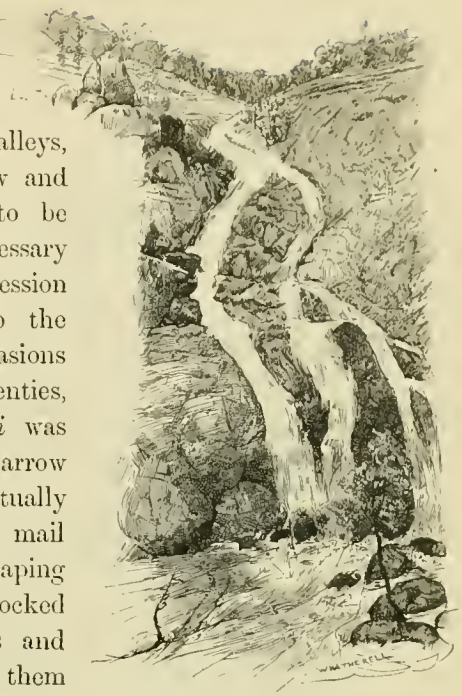
The scene from the summit is most beautiful, as almost the whole of the north-eastern district lies spread before one. There are two landscapes, one soft and sunny, the other bold and rugged. On the left the valleys of the Ovens and the King Rivers wind through the hills, while on beyond, the Strathbogie and Warby Ranges stand out in dark-blue masses against the sky. These ranges are spurs of the great Dividing Range, and are noted as being the haunts of all the bushrangers who have had any lengthy run of lawlessness in Victoria. They are full of caverns and fastnesses known only to those who have frequented them, and are so wild, rugged, and covered with scrub and brushwood, that they afford an almost secure hiding-place for outlaws. The greater part of the river valleys is given up to the cultivation of grain, while close along the banks of the river hops and tobacco take the place of cereals; and, looking down from afar over a waving sea of eucalypti, these golden patches of corn and emerald-tinted plantations of hops, swaying to and fro in the breeze, make a picture of calm peace and contentment from which it is hard to turn the eyes away.

To the south the scene changes. Half a turn to the left, and it is scarcely recognisable as the same world. Here we have hill upon hill, rising as they recede like colossal steps leading to some giant castle, at first covered with forest and scrub, with great blocks of granite jutting out every here and there, rough and rugged ridges gradually appearing to grow smoother and smoother, changing their hue at every step backward until they finally culminate in a thin blue line, tipped with a dazzling mass of white. The climax of the scene lies in the backbone of the Alps, which during several months of the year are covered with snow. Every here and there lofty peaks, rising high above the surrounding table-lands, stand streaked with great masses of snow, which, catching the rays of the glorious sunshine, fling back the light in a hundred delicate shades of shell pink. To the east lies the valley of the Mitta-Mitta, one of the principal of the north-eastern rivers. Taking its rise in the high plateaux around Omeo, it flows north-west, draining a large extent of country, and finally falling into the Murray, which receives the waters of all the rivers rising on the northern sides of the Alps or the Great Dividing Range. Most of the valley of the Mitta is very rich soil, but the river during its course passes through some most terribly rough country.

Beyond Stanley the country is nothing but a continuance of high mountain ranges dissected in every direction by deep ravines and deeper gorges, down which small mountain streams flow, now rushing and splashing down a precipitous descent, now passing through a small flat basin, beside which it is customary to find alluvial diggings being carried on, for the whole of this country is auriferous, and go where you will the colour of gold is almost always to be found, though the spots where the precious metal is discovered in quantities sufficient to make the working of it profitable are not quite so widespread. The geological formation of this part of the country is Lower Silurian and granite, and wherever this formation is found in Australia, gold is almost sure to be met with in larger or smaller quantities.

Returning to Beechworth, two ways of reaching the main branch of the mountain

lie open—either to take the train to Everton, and then on to Myrtleford, or to drive direct to Myrtleford. If the weather be fine, the drive will be the pleasanter, for the road is good, and lies through some pretty hill and forest scenery, broad valleys, and low, well-grassed spurs, from which every now and then glimpses of distant peak and ridge are to be obtained. As we travel along this road, it is necessary to pass over the Buckland Gap, a natural depression in the surrounding hills, which leads down into the valley of the Ovens. It was here that on two occasions Power, a bushranger, who was out in the early seventies, "stuck up" the Royal mail. His *modus operandi* was to drag a great log across the track, which was a narrow cutting along the hill-side; and, having effectually blocked the way, he would lie in wait until the mail was perforce stopped by this obstacle, and then, leaping out from his concealment, with a loaded and cocked revolver in his hand, would make the passengers and driver get out and sit in a row while he relieved them of all their money and valuables, after which he would rifle the mail-bags, and then decamp. He was not a cruel and bitter enemy of mankind, like most of his class, and never took the life of a fellow-creature, but contented himself with the crime of robbery under arms, and so escaped with a life sentence. After leaving the open forest, the road winds along the banks of the Ovens to Myrtleford, which is a small village built on the bank of the river.

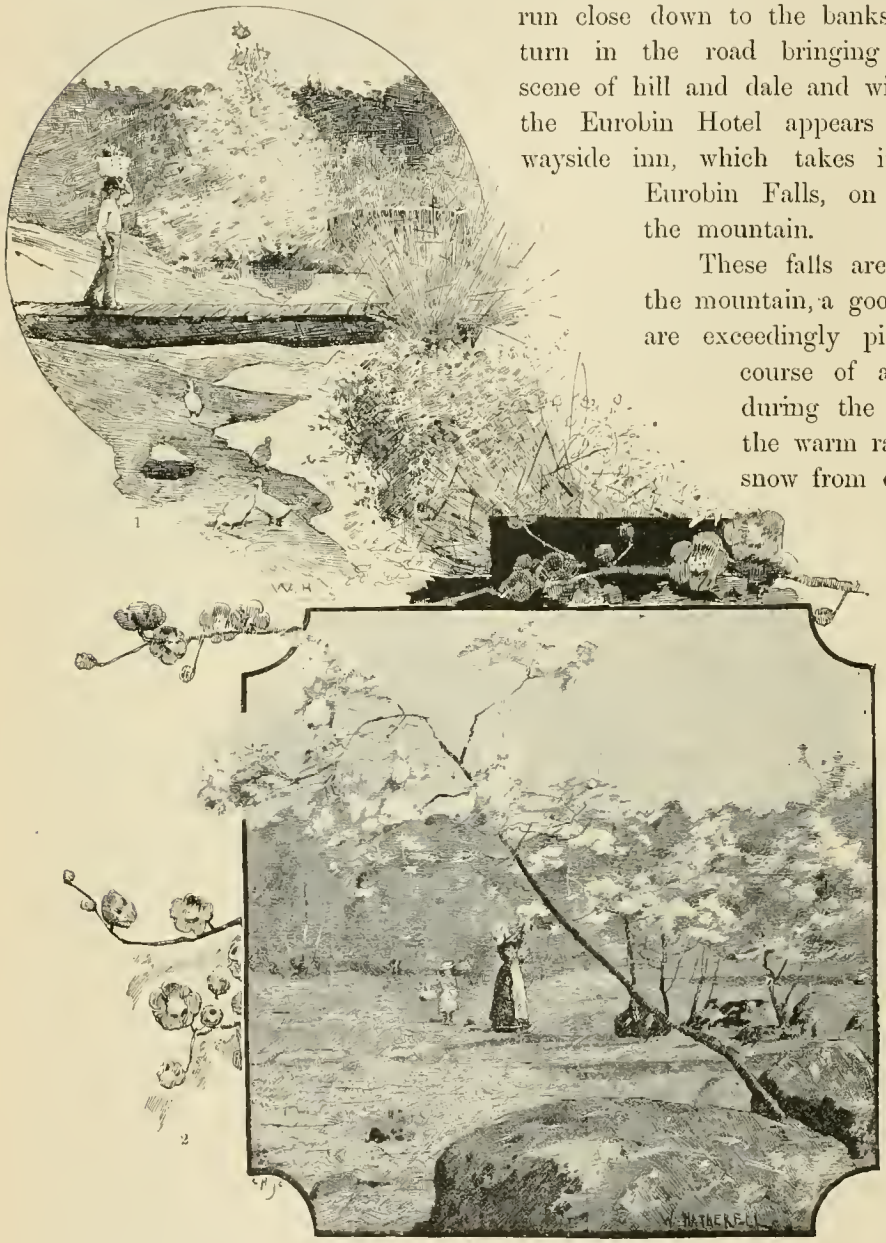


THE FALLS, REID'S CREEK.

The Buffalo Mountain overshadows the little township, and seems to keep watch and ward over it, for, looking up from below, the summit seems but a few furlongs away, though in reality it is several miles off. The Buffalo is a short chain of ridges running north and south, in the centre of which two rounded peaks, some distance higher than the surrounding ridges, create a very strong resemblance to the back of a buffalo. To carry out the idea, one peak is known as the Horn, and another somewhat lower as the Hump. In this mountain chain, though of lower elevation than many of the peaks and ridges in the Alps proper, there is scenery of the most beautiful description. What it lacks in the mightiness and grandeur that gives the effect of incomparable magnificence to the views from some of the higher mountains it gains in variety: masses of rugged rock, waterfall, cascade, chasm, cleft, and precipice make up the component parts of scenes which are only surpassed by those from Mounts Hotham and Feathertop, and perhaps those amongst the head waters of the Limestone and Pilot Rivers.

As the ascent of the Buffalo is never made up the face of the mountain, owing to the precipitous nature of the sides, and the numerous clefts and chasms which are

continually intersecting the way and over which goats alone can manage to scramble, it is necessary to travel on up the river, through Happy Valley, past Freeburgh and the Wool-shed, skirting the base of hills which run close down to the banks of the river, each turn in the road bringing an ever-changing scene of hill and dale and winding stream, until the Eurobin Hotel appears in sight—a small wayside inn, which takes its name from the Eurobin Falls, on the lower side of the mountain.



1. HOLMES CREEK, BEECHWORTH. 2. WATTLE TREES IN SPRINGTIME.

These falls are some distance up the mountain, a good sharp climb, and are exceedingly picturesque. In the course of a snow-fed stream, during the early spring, when the warm rains are melting the snow from off the sides of the mountain, a foaming torrent must rush down the hill-side, rendering these falls very beautiful; but during the summer months it subsides to a clear and sparkling brooklet, a cascade rather than a waterfall.

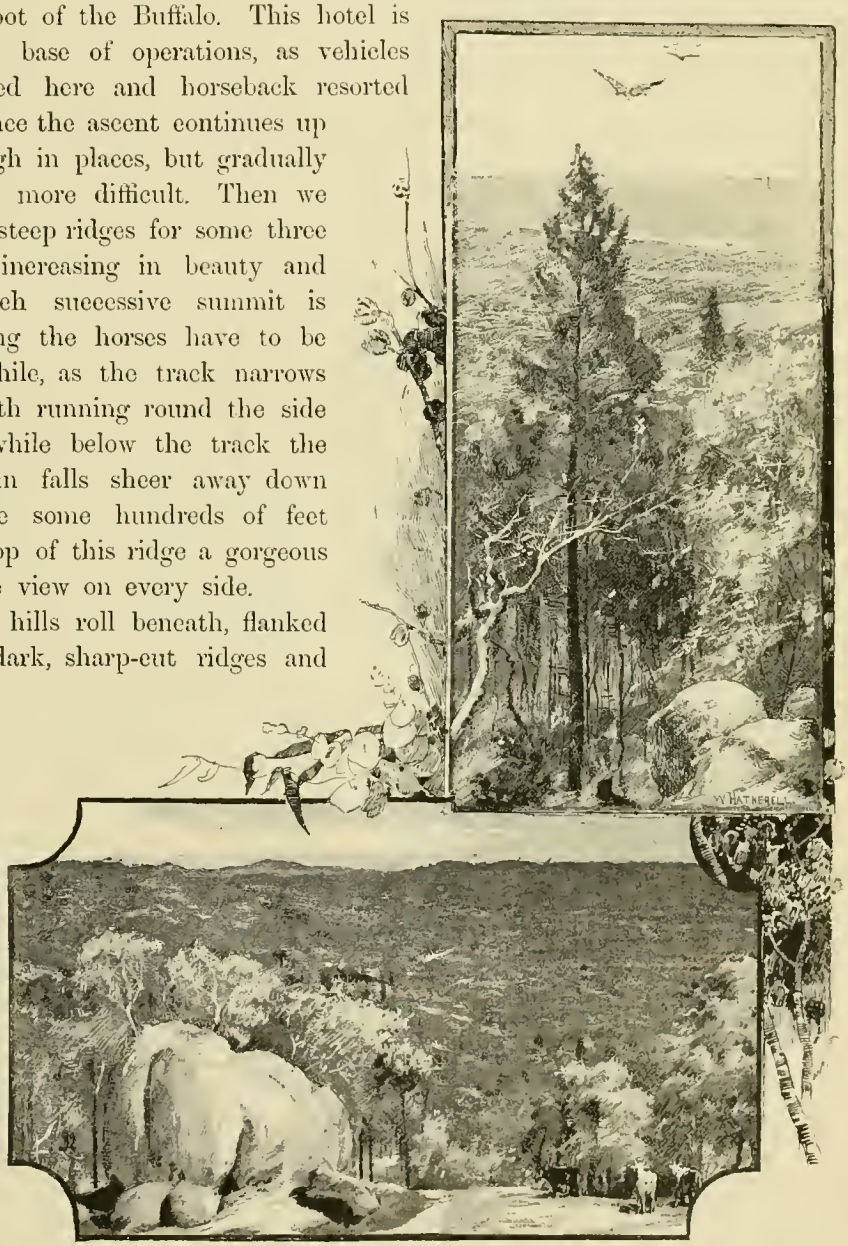
About a mile and a half beyond the Eurobin is the township of Porepunkah, which stands at the junction of the Buckland with the Ovens River. These two rivers drain the two sides of the Buffalo range—the Buckland the north and western sides, the Ovens the east and south-eastern slopes.

Leaving Porepunkah behind, the road gradually ascends, sometimes over low rises,

sometimes up steep spurs, passing through scenery that is always pretty and sometimes beautiful: stretches of the river flowing silently in gentle ripples over its gravelly bed, its banks fringed with wattles showing a mass of glorious bloom, deep vales and valleys clothed with a luxuriant growth of ferns, bracken, and river shrubs, with the giant stems of the eucalyptus rising out of the thick undergrowth, their branches covered with sweet-smelling white and pinkish blossoms, scenting the air with the perfumes of Araby.

Nine miles up the Buckland River, above its junction with the Ovens, stands an hotel near to the foot of the Buffalo. This hotel is generally made the base of operations, as vehicles have to be discarded here and horseback resorted to. For some distance the ascent continues up a gradual slope, rough in places, but gradually becoming more and more difficult. Then we mount sharp, short, steep ridges for some three miles, the scenery increasing in beauty and magnificence as each successive summit is reached. Before long the horses have to be abandoned for a while, as the track narrows to a mere sheep-path running round the side of a steep range, while below the track the side of the mountain falls sheer away down into a deep ravine some hundreds of feet below. From the top of this ridge a gorgeous panorama meets the view on every side.

Thickly-wooded hills roll beneath, flanked on every side by dark, sharp-cut ridges and deep gorges, bold rock jutting from out the hill-sides, and black shadows showing the whereabouts of perpendicular clefts, while every here and there the glisten and sparkle of clear water marks the place of some mountain spring, gushing forth from beneath the rock, and trickling slowly down the hill-side.



VIEWS FROM ONE TREE HILL.

until with a flash it disappears over the edge of the precipice. High rugged steeps gradually give place to gentler slopes, which finally merge into the valley of the river, sweeping down towards the plains in the far dim distance.

Still upward, the path leads on through low, stunted, thick gum scrub, fearfully rough to travel in, over small table-lands called plains, until the foot of the Horn, the highest summit of the mountain, is reached. A sharp scramble of about twenty minutes brings one to some huge rocks, massed together, at the foot of which there is a large natural cavity, which has been called the "dining-room." The entrance into this compartment is through a small hole in the side of the rock. The floor, which is composed of rock, is flat, and over it large boulders lie scattered, which serve for the purpose of seats; there is one wall, almost at right angles to the floor, and the roof consists of an enormous flat rock, sloping down at an angle of about 45°. A section of the cavity would present the following appearance: . After a short clamber up the rock, the very top of the Horn is reached, some 4,000 feet above sea-level.

The summit is a small, almost flat rock, about eighteen feet in diameter, sloping gently towards the edge. A scene of mountain, cliff, gorge, and valley, impossible to describe, greets the beholder. Looking over the edge of the rock, the mountain seems to fall almost sheer down, and far below immense rocks jut out in great angular masses, while still further down lies a deep gorge, the tree-tops looking like a solid sea of feathery green.

On every side spreads hill upon hill—east, west, north, and south—as far as the eye can reach. Thick-wooded slopes and deep ravines, carpeted with a tangled mass of rich undergrowth, with here and there great masses of granite—grey, white, and purple—jut forth from the sides, or crown the tall summits of the hills. Precipitous chasms and clefts run far into the hill-sides, their dark and rugged faces brightened by the glisten of running streamlets, which, threading their way down the upward slopes, disappear in miniature cascades into the bottomless gulfs below. River-courses, at first girt with rugged spurs, then opening out into broad valleys, and far down them alternate patches of golden corn and dark-green belts of forest, lie side by side. Five miles away, the Hump rises up in all his majesty. The ascent, though difficult in places, is well worth the making, as the views are, if anything, finer than those from the Horn.

Returning to Porepunkah the route lies south-eastward, still tracing upwards the valley of the Ovens to Bright, an extremely pretty little township, situated at the junction of Morses Creek with the Ovens River. English trees grow in the streets, which are fine, wide, and well kept. The town spreads over a low spur at the very feet of the great mountain system of Victoria. The scenery, both in the town itself and round about its environs, is very beautiful. Here long since a great rush took place to the Buckland and neighbouring diggings; indeed, mining, both reefing and alluvial, is still carried on—reefing, by small companies; fossicking, by Chinamen, of whom there are a goodly number in this district. In the days of the early rush, Chinamen flocked to these diggings in such numbers that the European miners one day rose in riot against them, and were with difficulty prevented from shedding the blood

of the Celestials. The Bright of to-day, happy and peaceful, with its broad streets and well-built houses, does not bear much resemblance to that tent-covered space where a malignant feud was nearly being fought out between the European and the Asiatic.

After leaving Bright, the road still continues in a south-eastern direction, becoming prettier and prettier as it ascends. The Ovens River, now narrowed to a small stream, rushing over its pebbly bed, can be seen, lit by the golden sunlight, sparkling below, while to the right high hills, flanked by deep gullies, rise abruptly from the river banks.

Messmate and white gums still constitute the forest, but wattle and ti-tree line the river banks, while fern and bracken grow in wild profusion and luxuriance down in the bottoms of the deep glens, amongst which the stately tree-fern is becoming more and more plentiful as the country rises. The flats, as they are called—small patches of alluvial deposit which border the river edges—have a very fertile soil, and, when cleared and cultivated, yield rich returns, especially where irrigation has been introduced; and all the farmers in this district seem well-to-do. Most of them have trim little cottages, surrounded by well-kept fruit and flower gardens, which, dotted here and there, add greatly to the picturesqueness of the scene.

Eighteen miles further up the river lies the village of Harrietville, ensconced in the mountains on the eastern branch of the stream, quite a small village—where mining is the chief industry. Most of the claims, of which Tiddle de Addledee is the chief, are fairly rich, and pay well the companies that work them; but when more capital is brought to bear upon this and the surrounding district, the returns should be greatly increased, as the whole country has the appearance of gold-bearing.

Beyond Harrietville, Mounts Feathertop and Hotham, the latter more familiarly known as Baldy, loom in the distance, rearing their conical peaks high into the heavens, the former 6,303, the latter 6,100, feet above sea-level. These, with the exception of the Bogong Mountains away to the north, 6,500 feet high, are the two loftiest peaks on the Victorian sides, and their summits, during most months of the year, are covered with snow, which in winter lies many feet deep. Feathertop has its name from the snow on the top, Baldy, its nickname, from the absence of vegetation. Leaving Harrietville, the road for some little distance ascends rapidly, winding round the hill-side, showing every now and then picturesque glimpses of the pretty village below; while deep glens, in which luxuriant masses of fern and undergrowth grow, branch off, and are lost in the surrounding steeps. Down these glens small snow-fed streams, now gently murmuring amongst the fern growth, now in foaming sprays dashing over miniature precipices, flow towards the Ovens, which drains the whole of this country.

Thirteen miles beyond Harrietville, and not far from the junction of the Omeo and Dargo roads, far up on the side of the mountain, stands the Hospice of Mount St. Bernard, now commonly known as Boustead's, and still more commonly as "Sailor Bill's." What induced Sailor Bill to retire up into this secluded spot, the highest human habitation in Victoria, is not generally known. Here, however, he and Mrs. Sailor William, an aged pair, reside in state, and many a benighted traveller, struggling through the blinding snow, has had reason to bless their kind-heartedness and generous hospitality. Not long since the Government put up an iron abode near to the old

hut, and Sailor William has become a person of importance, since he entertains the mailman from Omeo and Dargo twice a week, while during the summer season he has many visitors. The Hospice has also been made a station for meteorological observations and reports.

The scenery from the summit of Mount St. Bernard is extremely beautiful. Below, the valley of the Ovens River, which, taking its rise in this mountain, winds away through gorge and valley to the plains beneath; all around, mountain peaks and ridges: to the south, Mounts Freezeout, Tabletop, and the Twins; to the west, Mount Cobbler and the Buffalo; to the north, the Bogong peaks; and to the east, Feathertop, Hotham, and Mount Cope. Some capped with snow; others covered with huge masses of granite; others bearing a small, stunted gum-scrub; others verdant with grasses and evergreen shrubs, intersected at every angle by deep valleys, luxuriant with ferns and undergrowth; some lying in the deep shadows cast by their taller brethren, dark and sombre-looking; others on which the sun is shining are lighted up, and, like countless emeralds, flash and glisten in brilliant greens, while far away blue waves of shadow alone mark the whereabouts of numberless glens and cañons running deep into the far distant hill-sides.

From the Hospice to the summit of Mount Hotham is five miles, the ascent of which is not difficult, while the scenery that lies spreading on every side is some of the most magnificent in the whole of the Alps.

The flush of glorious sunlight that comes stealing up at the early dawn of day, or the last lingering rays of evening light that pierce the wild fastnesses of these giant chains, and light up their lofty crests, while far below the valleys are sunk in the sombre gloom of night, render the scene one of such beauty and grandeur as to be worthy of the pen of a Ruskin, or the brush of a Turner.

From Hotham to Feathertop is several miles, but during the summer months it is not very difficult to get from one to the other. These two mountain peaks are joined together by a long, sharply-defined range called the "Razorback," flanked on either side by steep precipices, which yawn beneath in sheer descents of hundreds of feet. A track runs along the top, looking first over this side, and then over that: wild, savage scenery this, awe-inspiring in its weirdness and desolation. This ridge, and its extensions north and south, form the backbone of the mountain system of Victoria; it is also the water-shed of all the rivers in the east of the colony, those which take their rise on the northern and western slopes draining away towards the Murray, and those on the southern and eastern slopes flowing through Gippsland, and finally falling into the South Pacific Ocean. The only exceptions are a few short creeks which flow into Lake Ovens, a fresh-water lake, with no apparent outlet, situate in the centre of a large depressed table-land called the Plains of Omeo.

From Feathertop, whose peak is frequently snow-capped, the valley of the Kiewa River can be seen stretching its course northward towards the Murray; while the general scenery, if possible, is finer than that from Mount Hotham. Mounts Fainter and Bogong stand in sharp outline against the horizon to the north-east, while to the east high table-lands lie like oases amongst the ragged and barren hill-tops.

THE BOGONG RANGES.

Leaving Hotham behind, a descent can be made through a gap in the main ridge, round the base of Mount Tabletop, and over the head waters of the Dargo, high table-lands, thickly covered with fine grasses. Covering the main range again under Mount Parslow, through the Parslow Plains, and along the valley of the Victoria River, the route lies eastward to Omeo. This town is built at an elevation of 2,000 feet on the Mitta-Mitta. Mining was the industry which gave it birth, and both quartz and alluvial mining are still carried on to a considerable extent, some of the reefs yielding a high percentage of gold; but latterly agriculture has been spreading over the surrounding plains, which consist of a rich volcanic soil, and repay their cultivation tenfold.

Making Omeo the base of operations, it is easy to travel through the remaining portion of these mountain tracts, but though the main routes are not very difficult, the scaling of the adjacent spurs and peaks presents a thousand obstacles, though they are obstacles which a tourist should be encouraged to overcome. One route lies northward. Leaving the Sisters and Mount Tambo on the right, passing over the plains through Omeo B and Omeo A, over McFarlane's Lookout, and round the base of Mount Gibb, one strikes the Murray a little to the south-east of Mount Kosciusko, which, 7,256 feet above the sea-level, is the highest peak in these mountains, and also boasts of being the most elevated point in the whole of the continent.

It is rather a collection of ridges than a single mountain, and runs in a south-westerly direction, the southermost point culminating in a giant mass of granite rock, some fifty feet higher than the rest of the ridge. The formation of this part of the country is granite and gneissose rock. In all these areas black oxide of tin is found in the beds of the creeks and in the gullies, and thin tin veins are seen in some places in the granite. Gold and titanic iron-stone also occur with the tin oxide.

The ascent of the mountain is steep, and the lower slopes are densely wooded, and frequently intersected by impassable ravines. Higher up, great masses of rock continually bar the way. Many of these rocks, isolated from one another by deep gullies, are polished down to the same surface, and prove undeniably that at some former time a glacial period existed in these regions of Australia. Now the snow does not lie on the mountain sides all the year round, except in a few deep gorges on the eastern slopes, where sometimes miniature glaciers are still formed, but melt immediately they leave their birth-bed. On the western slopes the warm winds, blowing from the interior of the continent in the month of November, invariably melt the snow. Casual falls of snow often take place during the summer months, but continuous falls never occur till the autumn is far advanced.

From the summit of Kosciusko the scenery is wilder and perhaps grander than that from any of the other great peaks, but it lacks their variety. It presents sharp escarpments, deep gorges, and densely wooded hills rising one on top of another in magnificent array, with now and again glimpses of the Murray Valley, which here, running not far from the foot of the mountain, takes a northerly course.

From Omeo a track branches eastward, and skirting the foot of the Bowen Range, crosses the head waters of the Limestone Creek, a western source affluent

of the Murray, and leads to the Cobboras, Forest Hill, and Mount Pilot, where much of the scenery is truly magnificent. Amongst these peaks the Murray River, the largest river in Australia, draining an area of over 300,000 square miles, takes its rise, a worthy birthplace of so great an offspring. The Limestone Creek, which is the south-west source affluent of the Murray, takes its rise near to the Cobboras, the roughest and wildest of all the Alpine ridges, and, flowing north-eastward, joins the parent river some distance north of Forest Hill. Like most of these small tributary streams, it has its source-runnels in grassy upland flats, but later on in its course traverses deeply-cut ravines and clefts in the mountain flanks, forming some beautiful cataracts and waterfalls. This is especially noticeable in the eastern affluents, which take their rise in and around Mount Pilot, where the country is more broken and rugged, and the river valleys are less defined, while their courses are shorter and their descents steeper.

The views, descending the valley on the main track from Omeo to Maneroo in New South Wales, are extremely fine. Away to the north rise the snow-capped peaks of Kosciusko and the Bogongs, a gleaming mass of the purest alabaster, casting their pale shadows far over the hill-tops, which, rising crest upon crest, like the waves of some mighty ocean, radiate forth infinite shades of blue and purple colouring. On either side the cone-shaped Pilot and the serrated rocky ridges of the Cobboras tower to the sky, while the road winds through bold wooded ranges and open grassy flats, buttressed by rough spurs, which rise precipitously in sharp escarpments.

In addition to the surface scenery, in the Limestone Creek valley there are many caves, some of the interiors of which are very lovely. Masses of crystalline stalactites hang from the roofs in graceful array, formed by the hand of Nature into the most fantastic of shapes, while clear, glistening stalagmitic pillars rise from the floor, and, meeting their twin brothers, descending by slow but even steps from the roof above, unite with them to form the most beautiful columns, reaching from floor to ceiling.

On the eastern side of the main chain in the great table-land of Maneroo the Snowy River and its numerous source affluents take their rise. This river is the largest of the southern streams, and the greater part of its course lies in New South Wales.

The upper part of the stream flows in a south-easterly direction until near the boundary-line between Victoria and New South Wales, when it takes a bold sweep to the north-west, and after flowing round the base of some outlying spurs, turns southward again, and descends rapidly into Victoria through a deep rocky valley.

For the most part, the basin of the Snowy consists of a narrow strip of alluvial land lying between rough ridges and steep spurs, often narrowed to a cleft in the mountain through which the water during countless ages has cut for itself a course. Dashing with great rapidity through these clefts and gorges, the river tumbles into the valleys beneath, forming many fine cataracts and waterfalls.

Much of the surrounding country is of the wildest description: high ridges, traversed and interlaced with a network of precipitous ravines, thickly timbered and covered with dense scrub from the very crest of the ranges to the depths of the valleys,

while every here and there huge masses of bare rock jut forth from the hill-side. From Omeo southward, after crossing the Gap, a depression in the Bowen range, there is a choice of routes through Gippsland; the one to the east down the Buchan River, a tributary of the Snowy; a second down the Tambo River, the centre basin; and a third, down the Dargo and Mitchell Rivers, the western valley leading towards the ocean.

MOUNT KOSCIUSKO BY MOONLIGHT.

The Buchan route is by far the most difficult, but is also the most picturesque. This river rises near the Cobboras, and during its course, at a spot called the Pinacles, disappears on the northern side of the mountain, and flowing underneath the ground, reappears on the south side, in a narrow wooded valley flanked on either side by frowning heights. Continuing its course down this valley, it joins the Snowy some distance north of the great marsh into which the latter river empties itself.

The Tambo route, leading south-eastward from the Gap, strikes the Tambo River west of Mount Hopeless, so named by the earliest southern explorer, who, hoping that

he would be able to see the southern ocean from the summit, ascended it; but his hopes were dashed to the ground, for he saw nothing but a sea of mountains. After striking the Tambo, the track winds down the main valley of the river. It then crosses a long spur through which the river has cut its way, and skirts the western foot of Mount Elizabeth and Fainting Range, a name given by exhausted teamsters who have to carry goods to Omeo. These heights, 3,000 feet above the sea-level, are the culminating point of a great seam of mountainous country, which fills up the fork between the Tambo and Tambarra Rivers. The descent on the northern side towards the Tambo is extremely sharp into a low-lying basin, while the other three sides fall away in countless ridges.

The Dargo route lies down the Dargo River, and from Omeo two tracks lead to the head waters of this river, the one crossing the range at the Gap, the other running athwart the mountains over a depression near Mount Parslow. The country through which the stream winds its way is of a similar nature to that of the Tambo Valley, but rougher and wilder, and the views are more extensive. The upper waters pass through high table-lands, covered with rich grasses; lower down the country becomes more broken, and the river winds in and out of narrow valleys and through deep gorges, and rushing on in an ever-broadening stream, finally empties itself into the lakes below Bairnsdale, one of the chief of the Gippsland towns.

MOUNT FEATHERTOP FROM THE OVENS RIVER.

CHRISTCHURCH.

English Characteristics—Origin of the Canterbury Settlement—First Impressions—The Reserves—The Cathedral—Cathedral Square—The Municipal Offices—The Supreme Court—The Banks—The Canterbury Museum—The "Domain"—The Hospital—Christ's College—Canterbury College—Boys' High School—Girls' High School—School of Art—Agricultural College—Warehouses and Factories—The Suburbs—Sports—Climate.

IF the name of the capital of the Canterbury province of New Zealand strikes upon the ear almost as an anachronism as applied to a town which has not yet been forty years in existence in a colony under fifty years old, it is at any rate a very pleasant anachronism. There is a homely sound about Christchurch, whether it carries one's thoughts back to the "home of lost causes and forsaken beliefs and unpopular names and impossible loyalties," or to that pleasant little Hampshire town through which flows one of England's many Avons. This Christchurch is also on an Avon—not so long as its namesake, but abounding in picturesque reaches, and adorning the whole length of its many windings. And the place is in keeping with its name. The distinctive characteristic of Christchurch is the extent to which it has preserved the genius of the Old Country.

"How very like home" is what thousands of visitors have remarked as the train from Port Lyttelton comes out of the tunnel, and shows a flat, rich country, with trim hedges and green fields. One could fancy oneself anywhere in the Midland Counties. What English scenery is to Swiss, that is the neighbourhood of Christchurch to the grander beauties of other parts of New Zealand. It is neat and pretty, smiling and cheerful; and, above all, homelike. And this first impression of home recollections strikes the key of all that is to follow—the English houses, the English people, the English ways. It is not England, but the nearest approach to it that can be found in the colonies. There is a charm about Christchurch and Canterbury that I have heard acknowledged in the most unexpected quarters, perhaps by no class of visitors so freely as by Australian colonists who have been long absent from the Old Country. The monotonous flatness is a great drawback, and the difficulty of obtaining a distant view from the interior of the town must be acknowledged. Christchurch cannot pretend to compete with Auckland or Dunedin for beauty of situation and surroundings, but in its own modest way it is not less attractive.

The Canterbury settlement, like that of Otago and the colony of South Australia, owes its origin largely to the fertile brain of Mr. Gibbon Wakefield. At the time of the High Church revival, an association of clergymen and other gentlemen belonging to the Church of England, and called the "Canterbury Association," was formed in London to found a settlement in New Zealand which should be as nearly as possible "a slice of the Old Country"—without the Dissenters, one may suppose. In accordance with this scheme the "Canterbury Pilgrims," who set sail in the "first four ships" (now become as historical as the canoes in which the Maoris believe that they arrived in the North Island), included a fair proportion of all classes of society, from younger sons of country

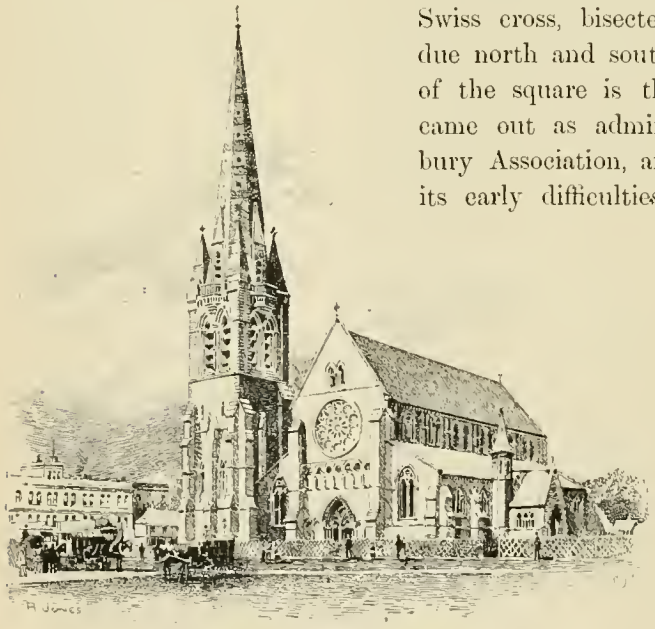
gentlemen downwards. They arrived at Port Lyttelton (named after the nobleman who was president of the Association) in December, 1850, and the original intention was that this should be the capital. But at that part of the coast access to the inland district is barred by a rugged range, on the steep slopes of which there was no room for a town of any size. The site for the capital was therefore selected inland some twelve miles, on the banks of a winding stream. It was no cheerful outlook which greeted the pilgrims when they climbed over the Lyttelton Hill. As far as the eye could reach north and south, there lay before them a vast expanse of plain, without a shrub or hillock, bounded some thirty miles south-west by the New Zealand Alps. It was a desolate prospect—one which we can scarcely realise nowadays that the plain forms one of the richest and most populous districts of the colony, and is planted in every direction with English trees and shrubs.

The heart of the town is the worst part of it. If you want to see Christchurch, you must go out of it. The gardens and lawns, the winding lanes and broad parks, the shady paths along the river-banks, and the picturesque wooden houses—these (not forgetting the distant view of the snow-capped Alps) are the charms of Christchurch. Nowhere else in the colony will you find the people take so much pains with their gardens, or the houses with such a "settled" look, as if their inhabitants had made up their minds to end their days in them, but were in no hurry to do so. Every man has done his best to make up within his own boundaries for the deficiencies of the general scenery. Perhaps if nature had been less kind to other towns, they would have done more to help themselves. And the same spirit of making the most of their natural conditions which has animated the individual residents has borne fruit in the public places. Excellent taste has been shown in laying out the parks and reserves, in planting the river-banks, in forming winding roads and pleasant lanes, which make the neighbourhood of Christchurch a network of delightful rides through constantly varying scenery of a modest, homely kind. The streets are laid out at right angles; but then they are so broken up by the meanderings of the river that strangers find it very puzzling to find their way about. And there are two transverse streets which help to destroy the stupid simplicity of a uniformly rectangular plan. In public buildings other towns may claim to be more advanced for their size, but Christchurch is, perhaps, the least *manquée*.

Viewed from the cathedral tower, Christchurch looks a considerable city, covering a great deal more ground than most towns of double the population. From the Lyttelton Hills there is also a good panoramic view, but in the town itself it is very difficult to get any wide or distant view, and one fails to receive the general impression of size and importance which Dunedin conveys. The first impression is particularly displeasing, for the railway—whether from the Port or from the south—steals through the edge of the lower parts of the town, and lands you, so to speak, at the back-door. Owing to the abundance of room to spread, the buildings are lower, as a rule, than in towns like Dunedin and Wellington, which are built upon the hill-side, or on narrow slips stolen from the sea. And the universal flatness makes the buildings look even lower than they are. Nothing stands out or receives any assistance from its surroundings.

The best buildings are interspersed with poor ones, which prevent any effect of continuous substantiality. It was long before the merchants could make up their minds where most to congregate. Shops hesitated between the north and the south side of Cathedral Square; and the question of eastern or western development presented difficulties which prevented prudent men from hurrying to build. There are plenty of two-storeyed wooden buildings in the very heart of the town, looking like the poor relations of their neighbours, and giving the place an "undress" air. As soon as you get away from the business part, many houses enjoy the luxury of gardens in a delightfully rural, or, at any rate, suburban fashion. By a happy thought the streets are made to call attention to the history of the settlement by being named after the English and colonial cathedral cities. Those which commemorate the English bishopries run east and west, and the others run north and south, with two exceptions—as to which no explanation is to be procured. Besides the two transverse streets—named Victoria and High—the regularity of the plan is constantly being put out by Oxford and Cambridge Terraces, which follow the windings of the river on either side.

The town is laid out in a square block, on the north, south, and east sides of which are broad boulevards known as "belts." On the west are the principal reserves: Hagley Park, recalling once more Lord Lyttelton's connection with the original settlement; the Domain, with the Botanical and Acclimatisation Gardens and the River Avon, which, after pursuing a zigzag course through the Botanical Gardens, passes through the town a little to the north of the centre in the shape of the letter S. Inside the town are three large open spaces: Cathedral Square in the north of the centre, with Cranmer and Latimer Squares west and east. The last two are oblong blocks used as playgrounds. Cathedral Square is the shape of a Swiss cross, bisected by Colombo Street, which runs due north and south. On the western and larger half of the square is the statue of Robert Godley, who came out as administrator on behalf of the Canterbury Association, and steered the settlement through its early difficulties with great tact and resource.



CHRISTCHURCH CATHEDRAL.

On the eastern half of the square stands the cathedral, erected after the design of Sir Gilbert Scott, modified by the local architect Mr. Mountfort, who superintended the building. At present only the nave and aisles, with the tower and spire, are finished; and another £40,000 will be required to complete the design, which includes short transepts, and a semicircular apse at the east end, with a *flèche* rising

from the roof at the junction of the transepts and choir. The style is an adaptation of the Early English. When complete the building should be a very handsome one, well worthy of its position as the centre of the city of Christchurch and the symbol of the aspirations of its founders. The part that is finished is dignified and well proportioned, with the exception of the west front, which is generally considered to be poor. Some of the stained-glass windows are very fine. The spire reaches a height of

THE AVON AT CHRISTCHURCH.

210 feet, and in the tower is hung a very sweet peal of eight bells. Morning and evening services are held daily, and the singing is excellent. It is the best service in the colonies, that of the Adelaide cathedral ranking second. Its excellence is mainly due to the school which is maintained in connection with the cathedral. This gives free board and education to the choristers, and also to some extent acts as a preparatory school for Christ's College. The view from the top of the tower is extraordinarily extensive, mountains to the distance of one hundred miles to the north-east and south-west being visible on a clear day. Westward you see the snow-capped ranges of the Southern Alps; some three miles to the south lies the nearest range of Banks' Peninsula,

commonly known as the Port Hills; about six miles to the east is the sea, Pegasus Bay and the Pacific; while beneath one's feet is a bird's-eye view of the town and suburbs which astonishes by the impression of extent that it gives. Viewed in this way, one would suppose that Christchurch had a population of sixty or seventy thousand, instead of less than half that number.

Cathedral Square offers a good opportunity for architectural effect. If all the finest buildings in the town were grouped round the cathedral, there would be nothing to compare with it in the colonies. There is plenty of space for each building to be seen to the fullest advantage, and the general effect would have been magnificent. But the Supreme Court, the Government Offices, and the municipal buildings have been erected on the river-side. The banks prefer Hereford Street; and although there is still hope of making the square fairly effective, it cannot be what it ought to have been. The Australian Mutual Provident Society have done their best with a fine building in white stone. Adjoining is a very nice block, rather too much in the corner for its merits to be thoroughly appreciated. An ex-mayor has responded handsomely at the entrance to Colombo Street North; and at the southern entrance an ex-councillor has put up a large building which one cannot call beautiful. A prominent position is assigned to the Post and Telegraph Office, an unpretentious brick structure of the solid kind. All these, except the last, have sprung up within the last three years, so there is hope for the square yet.

Prettiest of the public buildings of Christchurch are the Municipal Offices, an Elizabethan mansion with tiled roof and painted-glass windows, erected in 1886. The style of architecture is quite new to the colony, though one hopes it may become common. The Supreme Court is a pretentious structure; but no visitor to Christchurch should fail to visit the Provincial Council Chamber, a handsome hall of a strikingly ecclesiastical type. The ecclesiasticism is a "note" affected by the educational buildings also, and gives a character to the architecture of the town. Amongst commercial buildings, the offices of the *Lyttelton Times* newspaper deserve mention as amongst the most commodious in the world. The Union Bank stands first amongst the banks; but none are in any way remarkable. The merchants of Christchurch have not been slow to build good substantial offices and warehouses; but they have not spent so much money in this direction as those of Dunedin.

Chief among the lions of Christchurch is the Canterbury Museum, which is supported by the university endowments. It is universally admitted to be the best museum in Australasia, as it is the largest, and it is said to rank thirteenth in size among the museums of the world. The special attraction is the unique collection of moa-bones and re-constructed skeletons of the moa, a huge wingless bird fully nine feet high which used to inhabit New Zealand. It is upon moa-bones that the success of the museum has been built up, the director, the late Sir J. von Haast, having worked wonders by exchanging them with other museums for all kinds of curiosities. He has also had the rare art to arrange his collections so as to make them attractive to the general public. A less dry or dull museum it would be hard to find. It presents interesting features for those who generally hold museums in most abhorrence. Amongst its

specialties may be noted the Industrial Art Gallery and the nucleus of a Picture Gallery.

Adjoining the Museum is the "Domain," a reserve of some eighty acres, mostly occupied by the Botanic Garden, which has been laid out with great taste on a peninsula almost entirely surrounded by the swift, clear waters of the River Avon. Adjoining are the Acclimatisation Society's grounds, where ponds, aviaries, and breeding-places have been established. Pheasants, partridges, larks, quail, rooks, jackdaws, blackbirds, thrushes, and many other English song-birds have been turned out from these grounds, and have multiplied greatly. The introduction of hares, which are now fairly numerous, is also the work of the society. Trout, to which great attention has been paid, have been exceedingly successful; so also have white fish. The attention of the society is now engaged upon the introduction of salmon. The ova have been successfully hatched, but it is doubtful whether the young salmon survive after they are turned into the rivers. The humble-bee is another recent acquisition due to the society, who have introduced it to fertilise the flowers of the red clover, which will not seed in New Zealand for want of it.

At the gate of the Botanic Garden stands the statue of James Sefton Moorhouse, twice superintendent of the Canterbury province, and the enterprising promoter of the tunnel through the Lyttelton Hills which bears his name. It was this tunnel which opened a passage to the sea for the produce of Canterbury. Its construction was fiercely opposed—first as impracticable, and then as useless. When made its opponents declared that it was a "white elephant," whereon Moorhouse enthusiastically replied, "I must have a railway into the interior to feed my elephant." And the best of the story is that he prevailed upon the Provincial Council to make the railway, which did feed the elephant, opening up thousands of acres of splendid agricultural land which sends its produce to Lyttelton for export.

South of the Botanic Garden stands the hospital, in charming grounds at a bend of the river. It is a picturesque-looking building of the Elizabethan type, mostly wooden. The terrace, with its gum-walk along the river for the convalescent patients, is worthy of an Italian palace, and forms a very remarkable feature. On the other side of the gardens, adjoining the Museum, are the buildings and grounds of Christ's College (the Church of England grammar school), the establishment of which for the education of their sons was one of the inducements held out to the "Canterbury Pilgrims." The buildings are still mostly of wood, and have a homely look of age and wear. They are placed round a square lawn, recalling memories of Old-World college-greens, and equally "tapu" to the schoolboy foot. Few English schools can boast so excellent a gymnasium as Christ's College, and the bathing-place and playing-fields adjoining are all that could be desired. The key-note of the school is struck by a pretty stone chapel, where service is held daily, as in English public schools. In every respect Christ's College has been a most successful institution. The Canterbury people like to hear it called "the Eton of New Zealand." Relatively to the other schools in the colony this name is well applied; but in a colony where everyone works for his living and there is no "leisured class," Eton neither can nor ought to be reproduced. Christ's

College may well be content to boast that it reproduces all the distinctive characteristics of an English public school; but it is Rugby rather than Eton. A leading feature in the school system is the attention paid to the physical side of education, to which the Canterbury people attach great importance. One cannot but be struck with the neat dress and nice manners of the boys; and the moral tone (if one may judge from the stamp of men who have been brought up in it) must be considerably higher than at the average English public school. There is none of its institutions of which Canterbury has more right to be proud than Christ's College; and the healthy influence it has exercised upon the community is a high tribute to the sagacity of its founders and conductors. Nor has the competition of the recently-established Government High School injured its prospects; on the contrary, the numbers of the college (now nearly three hundred) keep up well, and its work has been stimulated all along the line.

CANTERBURY COLLEGE AND SCHOOL.

Canterbury College is the modest name of the institution which corresponds to the Otago University, which it resembles in the general course of its work, with the exception that it has neither a school of medicine nor a school of mines. The English department of Canterbury College, under the charge of J. Macmillan Brown, has been particularly successful, the English literature classes being the largest recorded at any university in the world. Another specialty of the college has been the number of lady students whom it has sent through the New Zealand University examinations. Unfortunately the buildings are so situated that there can never be any extent of ground round them, and one cannot but think how much better it would have been if a site had been chosen a few yards further north across the river in the park, so that the university could have stood in spacious grounds, which in such a site might easily have been made very pretty. The same remark applies to the Boys' High School and the School of Art, which stand in the same block as the university. A boys' school with a limited playground must necessarily work at a disadvantage. It may be doubted, too, whether it was worth while to establish a Government school of this high type in a town where secondary education was so well provided for by Christ's College.

What was rather wanted was a good commercial school, and that is what the High School is becoming in order to maintain its existence.

The Girls' High School, which is of older foundation, has from the outset been very successful, in spite of the existence of a good private girls' school in the town. Of the Normal School one hears little; but our illustration will suffice to show that the teachers in the Canterbury province ought to be well trained.

The School of Art, though of recent establishment, flourishes admirably, and has become the source of a distinct artistic movement in the community. Nor, before leaving the subject of schools, should I fail to mention the Agricultural College, on the Cirencester model, in connection with Canterbury College. Here youths who want to qualify for colonial farming will learn their work far better than is practicable at any similar school out of the colony. The college is situated at Lincoln, some dozen miles from Christchurch. The farm has an area of 500 acres, and the students are taught farm-work, agricultural chemistry, botany, land-surveying, and other cognate matters, practically as well as theoretically.

At Sumner, a seaside township about six miles from Christchurch, there is an excellent Deaf and Dumb School on the articulation method; and at Burnham, eighteen miles on the southern line, is a large Industrial School, with a farm attached. At Lyttelton the orphanage is situated; and at Sunnyside, four or five miles from the cathedral, is a palatial lunatic asylum.

THE SUPREME COURT.

It would need a nice discrimination to determine whether Christchurch or Dunedin may claim the first position in New Zealand in educational matters; but that both towns are far ahead of the average, owing to the wise forethought of their founders, must be generally admitted. Since the Colonial Government took upon itself the care of education throughout the colony, the systems in the two provinces have been assimilated; but originally the Otago system was founded upon Scottish, and the Canterbury upon English, models, and the traces of this are still seen and felt. Generally speaking, primary education is perhaps better in Otago and secondary education in Canterbury; the actual school-work is, probably, weaker in Canterbury, and the playground and moral

influences inferior in Otago. The Otago University is palpably founded on the model of the Edinburgh University; Canterbury College is eclectic.

Passing from education to commerce, there are fewer large warehouses than in Dunedin, and they are more scattered. Dunedin used to be the chief distributing centre of the colony, and still retains a considerable circulating trade; but Christchurch has never aimed at supplying the wants of any other part of the colony beyond the Canterbury province. Hence there are also fewer commission-agents to be found here. Trade is mainly in the hands of a few large firms. The imports are unfortunately small; but Lyttelton is now the chief exporting-port of the colony, sending out all the wealth produced in the famous Canterbury Plains. There is no distinctively manufacturing quarter; but although Otago long took the lead in this department, Canterbury cannot now be far behind. The Mosgiel woollen-factory and Burnside freezing-works find their counterparts at Kaiapoi and the Styx. The Addington railway-workshops are much larger than those at Hillside. Messrs. Scott and Co. are building locomotives for the Government railways. There is a foundry which is almost a public institution, and a boot-factory with a colonial reputation, while wool-scouring employs a large number of hands. More interesting is the furniture-factory of the New Zealand Gillow, Mr. A. J. White, whose enterprise and good taste have been a public benefit. People who are particular about their "interiors" send hither for furniture from all parts of the colony. Another prosperous native industry in the neighbourhood is brick-making; and there are potteries at Springfield and Malvern which turn out very creditable wares of a simple kind.

Locomotion is easy. Distances are long; but the roads are good, and the footpaths to match, being asphalted for half their breadth all through the town, thus allowing soft-footed people to walk on the earth in dry weather. Tramways abound, mostly steam-tramways; and the cabs are all that men can desire. You can hardly fail to notice the number of vehicles of every kind in the street—two or three for every one used in Auckland or Dunedin. The level country is made to drive or ride on. Out of Canterbury one rarely sees a dog-cart in New Zealand; but in Christchurch they are as plentiful as in an English country-town, and occasionally one even meets a tandem. Owing to the facilities for moving about, the suburbs extend a long distance on every side of the town. Due north, where the ground is highest, lies St. Albans, merging into Papanui, where many of the wealthy merchants live. The road from town is lined for three miles with handsome villas surrounded by ample gardens. Going westward along the Avon from Papanui, you come to a new residential township, Bryndwyr. South of this, and opposite St. Albans, is Merivale, a very favourite suburb, below which, on the outskirts of the town, is less aristocratic Carlton, lying along the river-bank. The district of Fendalton stretches along one of the prettiest winding roads in the neighbourhood, between Papanui or St. Albans and Riccarton, which lies due west of the cathedral. Riccarton is the site of a settlement made by a farmer of the name of Deans, who "squatted" on the land before the arrival of the orthodox "pilgrims" in the "first four ships." His descendants still retain a large freehold farm in Lower Riccarton, the part nearest the town, which prevents much building along this road. Upper

THE NORMAL SCHOOL.

Riccarton has one of the prettiest and most home-like little churches in the colony, with a very sweet organ. In the neighbourhood are several pleasant country-houses, notably "Ilam," a picturesque, rambling wooden house, with grounds laid out with rare taste. It is quite the show-place of Christchurch; and though there are many grander houses in Australia, it would be difficult to meet with one which is equally home-like and charming. Adjoining Upper Riccarton is Middleton, whence you pass to Sunnyside, where the gorgeous lunatic asylum is situated. Nearer to town, on the south-western road, is Addington, which is not fashionable, owing to the neighbourhood of the stock sale-yards, railway-workshops, and gaol. Due south of Christchurch proper is Sydenham, the working-man's suburb, which is nearly as large as Christchurch itself. Thence continuing the circle eastward, at some distance lies Opawa, a very pretty suburb, through which runs the River Heathcote. Due east of the cathedral is Avonside, a name which explains itself; and to the north-east is Stanmore.

At a distance of about six miles to the south-east of the cathedral is Sumner, the watering-place of Christchurch—a land-locked bay basking in the sun, and sheltered from all cold winds. Further east is New Brighton, where there is a capital beach for a canter. Past Papanui you reach Kaiapoi, of woollen manufacturing fame, in due course. Riccarton is on the road to Prebbleton. At Sunnyside you are on the way to Lincoln Agricultural College. Nor should any visitor fail to go past Opawa on to the Port Hills, whence there is a splendid panoramic view of Christchurch, with the snow-capped Alps in the far distance. It is through these hills that the tunnel is pierced to Lyttelton, the port of Christchurch. The town has a population of nearly five thousand, and is built on the slopes of the hill. The harbour, thanks to the expenditure of some £300,000, is excellent; the inner harbour, enclosed by stone piers, spreading over 110 acres of still water, encircled by wharves, giving ample accommodation. A graving-dock 450 feet long has been built, and the harbour is lighted at night by electricity. Here are situated a sailors' home and the gaol for long-sentence prisoners, who find employment in harbour-works.

Christchurch is the sporting centre of the colony. The Dunedin races attract as large an attendance, but the interest in racing is wider-spread in Canterbury and the sport more fashionable. The racecourse at Upper Riccarton is very pretty, and the arrangements reach a pitch of luxury scarcely attained at Ascot and Goodwood. In the November week, in which the Prince of Wales's birthday falls, all Canterbury flocks into Christchurch to the Agricultural and Pastoral Show and three days' racing. The show is held to be the best south of the line, and the attendance averages 15,000. At

THE HOSPITAL BY MOONLIGHT.

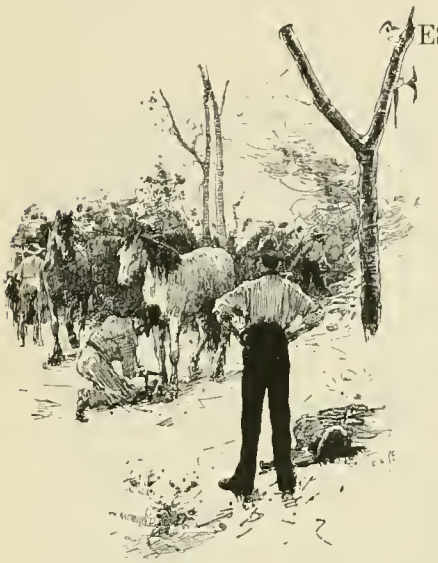
the races a thousand guineas of added money are offered with the "New Zealand Cup." Nor is horse-racing the only popular sport. The true home of cricket is also in Christchurch, and it would not be easy to find a more excellent home than Lancaster Park, with its beautiful turf, even as a billiard-table, surrounded by a cinder path for athletics, and a raised turf bank all round for the spectators. Football, too, flourishes, though the colder climate gives Otago the palm; and there is boating on the Avon; nor could you wish for better roads for the bicycle. The flatness of the ground favours every kind of sport. The cricketer has only to run a roller anywhere in Hagley Park and he can make an excellent pitch. Everyone who has a large enough garden can make his own tennis-lawn at a minimum of expense. In winter there is hunting, Reynard being replaced by Puss. The way in which wire

fences are jumped astonishes the "new chum," for here men do not ride to hunt, but hunt to ride.

A word remains to be said about the climate, which is mild and healthy, though lacking the bracing elements of the southern air. Occasionally in summer there are hot north-west winds, which are very unpleasant: but it is a good climate on the whole, neither too hot nor too cold, and perfection for flowers. The English atmosphere of the province has attracted a considerable number of families with more or less private income and with children to put out in the world, and I know nowhere else in the colonies where the Englishman is likely to feel so much at home. The old residents declare that Christchurch is no longer what it was, and that the peculiar genius of Canterbury has vanished; but it still remains a very pleasant place, and one of which its makers may well feel proud.

NECK OR NOTHING.

Rest after Toil—Morning—A Flock of Emu—Detected—Off !—Capture– A Worthy Death—Victory and Defeat.



HOBBLING.

YES; that was a bad spill. Shift my pillow a little; thank you, that is better. Ah! poor aching back that will never have strength to hold itself straight up again. How it has rained all day: it is something in this eternal, cold English drizzle to look back upon the glorious sunshine of Queensland. Too hot? Well, yes; I suppose it was sometimes; but I seem to have forgotten all that. I can only remember what—well—what it is madness for me to remember; though I would barter the whole of the rest of my worthless life for just one month of that glorious freedom.

I can feel now the fresh, even, cold night air, with the sky cloudless and the glow of the departing sun still lingering about the horizon, although the stars are shining brightly overhead. The moon is just visible behind the trees, and soon its gracious light will flood the whole forest and dispel the darkness; now the shadows lie dark and impenetrable, and the tall trees stand out black as ink against the clear sky.

We have reached camp late, after a wearisome ride of thirty-five miles, and have had to bring our horses in steadily, because the drought has burnt and scorched up the whole country, and there is no feed nor decent water to be had anywhere. Right glad are we to see the great camp-fires and hear the cheerful holloa which greets us as we ride up. We spring lightly from our saddles, in a moment our girths are loosened and we are busy finding a safe place for our saddles, for the wily dingo is a great marauder, and neither saddle-straps nor stirrup-leathers are safe from his omnivorous appetite.

Now we lead our horses down the steep bank into the dry bed of the creek, to water them at the troughs which have been put up to save the poor perishing cattle. After some sniffing and snorting and a great pretence of fear, the horses consent to plunge their noses into the troughs and drink, whilst we send the buckets up and down into the well and draw the water for them.

"Now up the bank again, Cæsar; you are to have a feed of corn to-night; for to-morrow night great things are expected of you. The moon will be just right for a scamper after the scrubbers. Yes, that is right! snort away and prick your fine ears forward to attention; we shall have some fine sport, you and I."

The horses must be hobbled short, or they will be half-way home before the morning; they are demons to stay on a camp now. There is as good grass round here as anywhere on the run, and yet they are always thinking that they know some place where it grows fresh, and green, and succulent. Poor brutes! there is no such thing as a mouthful of green grass to be had anywhere on the run now. We must put bells on Vixen and Thunderbolt; they are not broken-in to eating corn; the camp has, therefore, no attractions for them, and they are sure to be the first to wander away.

And now the horses are hobbled and belled, and are congregated round a canvas hammock, quarrelling over their feed of corn. The quart-pots are boiling and hissing by the fire; now they are moved to one side and the tea popped in; now we stir with a piece of grass and add the sugar. "Lend me your pannikin—mine is strapped to my saddle, and I am too done up to go and fetch it. I have been riding since daybreak, and I was fool enough not to take a snack with me. Cut me a bit of salt beef, will you? Those 'Johnny cakes' look fine. The folks at home would turn up their noses at them, and call them dirty, because they are baked in the ashes instead of in an oven; but I think the most approved scone Europe can produce cannot come near a well-made Johnny cake; just flour and water, a pinch of soda, and a pinch of acid."

Wrapped tightly in a good blanket—within hail of a roaring blaze—listen to the yarns which are being spun out round the fire, whilst the pipe of peace is being smoked. There is seldom much point at the end of a bushman's yarn, and it is, as a rule, more delightful to the teller than to the hearer; but at the worst it is a splendid soporific. One by one the men drop out of the ring and roll themselves up in their blankets, and soon the deepest silence spreads over all.

Far in the distance the bells of the horses tell the watchful ear in which direction they are straying, and how far away; and then nearer rises the deep, plaintive howl of the hungry dingo, searching for prey. They will not have much difficulty in finding what they want now, for the drought has weakened cattle and horses, and calves and foals are only born to die, and to feel the hot breath and the sharp teeth of the dingo in their young, tender flesh even before life is extinct.

"Is it morning already? How fresh it is. Toby, hi! Wake up, there! will you? How those black fellows do sleep, and how they do hate getting up in the morning. That's right."

"Now, you fellows, you do as we agreed last night; get away to Wild Horse Creek and collect a good mob of mixed cattle. Keep them in hand all day, and gradually edge them away towards the Devil's Plain. I will stay and inspect the bulls and join you at sunset."

The bulls are a mob of 220 thoroughbred shorthorn youngsters we have had up from New South Wales to improve our herd. They have come overland, and have been driven some 1,000 miles. They were near upon five months in doing a journey which ought to have taken them only between three and three and a half, and the drought and consequent starvation through which they have passed, and into which they have entered, has well-nigh pinched the life out of them.

We tried at first to cut down the edible trees for them, so as to give them a little green food; but the other cattle found us out; they learnt to know the ring of the axe, and crowded in from all sides. So then we put the youngsters on the best patch of grass we had on the run; but their bones are half-way through their skin, and their eyes sunken and hollow. In spite of their condition they show their breeding—the fine silky coat, which (even though ruffled) is not coarse; the well-shaped horn; the firm, low-set legs. They have done such a perishing that they will always be a bit stunted in their growth, I fear. The men in charge declare that the pedigree bull marked D on the flank is determined to commit suicide; they have pulled him out of the bog times out of number, but he resolutely walks in again, and seems doggedly to declare that life in these times is not worth living. I retort that he is too valuable an animal to lose, and must live for me, if not for himself; but he had his own way at last, and died in a bogged water-hole in about two inches of water.

The water in the wells at which during the past few weeks the bulls had been watered had given out, so we drove them away to the new troughs at the camp where we had passed the night. As we came up to the place we found the "gins" busy drawing the water and filling the troughs. I rode on and sent them away out of sight, for cattle hate and dread the sight and smell of blacks. Bush cattle will detect them in an instant, and rush like mad.

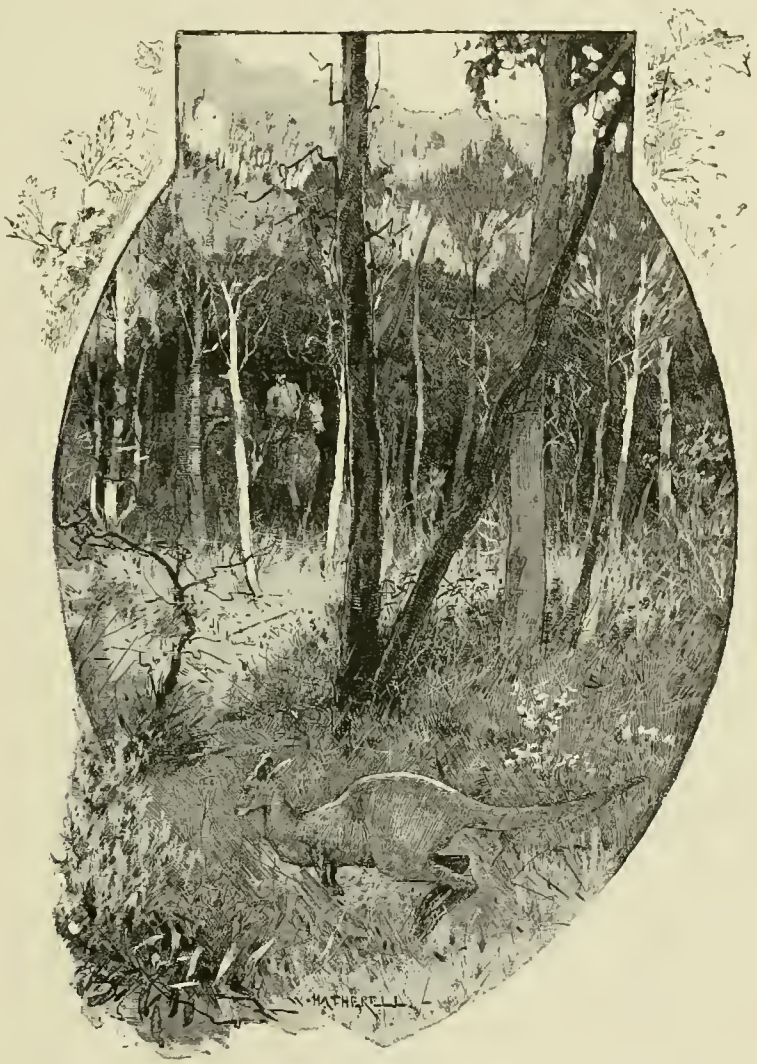
The bulls had been handled so much that they were as quiet as old milkers; we nevertheless had considerable trouble to make them take to their new drinking-place, and the sun had long passed the meridian before our task was accomplished.

It was a rare season for getting at the wild cattle, for the drought was forcing them out of their strongholds in the impenetrable parts of the bush scrub, and at dusk they were obliged to come down into the plains to get enough to keep body and soul together.

We rode fast for a few miles, then slowed down into a walk, and dropped our voices into a whisper; a few miles further even whispering was forbidden. I rode first and spoke to those behind me by signs. The sun was setting, and the light slanted away through the forest, touched the shimmering box-trees, and turned the soft brigalow-leaves into silver. Now and then a kangaroo would hop across our path, a wallaby start out from a clump of dry grass, an iguana scuttle up a tree. We passed the yard which we had put up to receive the scrubbers should we be lucky enough to secure any. It was a large enclosure, with some two or three trees growing in it. The approach was formed by two long wings, very broad at first, and gradually narrowing like a V until they opened into the yard. These wings were completely covered with boughs and bushes, so as to deceive the suspicious cattle concerning the nature of the trap into which they were being asked to enter.

Now I raise my hand and call a sudden halt. We have stumbled on a flock of emu, and if we set them running and any cattle should see them, it would start them off like a flash of lightning. There are eight of them, and a large cock-bird leads the way. They are wandering through the trees, their heavy bodies swaying to and fro, their

long necks outstretched, and their tread as heavy as a horse's. They do not see us, and carry themselves without fear, as if the world belonged to them; we, sitting motionless, crouching down on our saddles, have just the same idea of our own position; and all round us, every gorgeous bird, every creeping insect, every



"NOW AND THEN A KANGAROO WOULD HOP ACROSS OUR PATH" (*p.* 32).

crawling ant doubtless thinks the same. To what end all this life, all this wonderful beauty? For man? For his end or enjoyment? Away, narrow, paltry idea! These deep solitudes have never echoed to man's tread, have never shaken with his boisterous merriment, or shivered at his cry of pain. Ages after ages have seen Nature groaning and travailing, through pain entering into life, with pain leaving it, but the great riddle of the why and the wherefore is still unanswered. Silence is king in these

solitudes; during the night-watches, during the noonday heat, not one cry or one twitter breaks the spell; but this rest of Nature is only apparent, and even as she sleeps she is at work.

The sun has set when first our ears catch the distant lowing of cattle—so distant is it that it might almost be the faint moan of the evening breeze as it eddies in the tall trees; but the practised ear detects it, and as we draw nearer we understand its meaning, just as clearly as if in human words the cattle were calling out their griefs. It was the uneasy lowing of a mob restless under its handling.

We approached very cautiously. Cattle get terribly nervous and suspicious when they are being handled and do not quite understand what is being done with them, and the very appearance of a strange man will make them rush. It was now quite dark, but in another ten minutes the moon would be up. We were in a thin scrub of low bushes, and a small fringe of trees screened us from the Devil's Plain, which was an open space bordered on all sides but this one by vast scrubs and high stony ridges.

Not a word was spoken, we hardly dared to breathe. In silence every man withdrew his revolver from his saddle-pouch, loaded it, or examined its priming. The horses' hearts were thumping like drums. Old Cæsar was quivering all over, as if he could jump out of his very skin with excitement. He shifted his ground uneasily, reefed over and over again, then stood stock-still and listened, with his ears pricked forward and his whole attitude ready for the great spring which should herald the start of that break-neck gallop.

Our cattle had begun to settle—some had lain down, others were feeding quietly; calves had found their mothers, and the lowing had all but ceased. And now the moon was rising above the great scrub, the darkness of the Devil's Plain was gone, and it was flooded with a light different to, but not less bright than, day.

The order to let the cattle move forward into the plain, but the men to remain sheltered as far as possible in the scrub, was passed from man to man by whispers and signs, and even as the direction was given, away at the other side of the plain the shadow of the great scrub suddenly seemed to move. Crouched forward on our horses' necks, we strained to see it, and be sure. Oh, how madly our hearts began to beat, how eagerly each bent forward! Ready—aye, ready—to be the first in the field. Danger—who thought of it? The delirium of its excitement was dancing in each brain. Man is immortal until his hour comes. Fear—who knew what it was whilst the hot blood surged through the veins? Every faculty was at tension point, the calmest pulse was throbbing, the sharpest eyesight, the acutest hearing, were strained to the last pitch.

From that moving patch comes a sharp, short call; it is the inquiring bellow of one of the scrub bulls. In an instant it is answered by one of the cows from our herd, and our cattle slowly and without haste spread themselves out across the plain.

Then from out the scrub defiles a long dark line, another challenge is given and again answered from our mob, and then the dark line moves very slowly forward, out of the shadow into the moonlight. A gully runs across the plain and divides the two mobs; when the scrubbers have crossed that gully our moment will have come. But what is it?—Is the lowing of our cattle telling the tale of man's presence? or does the

"THE BULLS ARE OFF!"

evening breeze carry the secret? The black line has halted. Good heavens! what a moment. Now or never! Without one call, without one sound, without one signal, the rush is made. One shake of the bridle, one touch with the spur, and the thunder of our horses' galloping is echoing through the night air. Man and horse are one—one to live, or one to fall with a crash from which neither is likely ever to rise again.

At the sound of that rush the wild cattle have dashed for the scrub. A fine race and a daring one was that. The cattle have a long start and are racing for life, but the horses are mad with the excitement of the chase. Nearer and nearer we draw, but closer every moment is the scrub, and nearer to it than we are to the cattle. Now for the supreme effort; what matter if earth and heaven pass away the next moment, if only in this one we triumph? Neck to neck—only a few yards more—only one more spurt; but the scrubbers split, and the advanced guard distance us. Plunge in between the divided mob, and if we do not net some of them, write us down boobies. The horses have seen their chance just as keenly and with as much judgment as we. One sharp prop and turn. "Ah! Cæsar, we have them now." Now rises the wild holloa. "Stand by! stand by!" we cry to our mates; and with a rush like a mighty wind we dash the mob of scrubbers back on to our cattle. The whole herd swept over the plains as if by one impetus, just as on a wild winter day the wind raises a handful of dried leaves, drives them wildly forward, and then circles them round and round. A magnificent effort is made to steady them, but for a few moments it is touch-and-go whether we lose the whole herd. At last their mad career forward is checked, and now round and round we go, circling the mob and pressing them back upon one another. The dust that has been raised is so great that it hangs round us like a thick pall, and we cannot distinguish anything at all—not even each other as we shoot past. Of the dense mass of cattle round which we are moving we see nothing—absolutely nothing. But a deep angry bellow rising above all the din tells us that we have at least secured for our prize the big black bull who has defied us for so many years. Now they rush at one side, now at another, but we are too many for them; they have found us out, and each time the rush is less determined than before. The quiet cattle are getting over their scare, and as they quiet down the dust subsides, and soon we know that we have garnered in five prizes—two bulls and two heifers (clean skins), and one old cow, perchance the mother of one of the heifers. She has the scar of the branding-iron on her side, and the cut of the knife on her ear; but long ago she deserted the path of peace and plenty for the wild freedom of the scrubs.

We allow them to steady and cool down. The outlaws soon divide themselves from the rest of the herd; and after some ineffectual efforts to escape they gather into the centre of the mob and sulk uneasily.

"Now move forward towards the yard—don't hurry—and use your voices as little as possible; whilst it helps to steady and give confidence to the quiet cattle, it maddens the scrubbers. Shoot anything that tries to escape."

The moment the move forward is made there is commotion amongst the outlaws. The two scrub bulls lower their heads as if for war, vacillate for a moment as to which side to take, then break through to the right and away, followed by the old cow.

She started too late, and Dick brings her back; but the bulls are off, each closely hugged by a horseman—the big dark one by me on Cæsar, the small brown one by Joe on Superb. Bang! bang! bang!—who can shoot at this speed? Get close up alongside, and shoot behind the shoulder.

Ah! monarch of the scrub, in vain is your speed—useless your great strength.

"THE GREAT SCRUB SUDDENLY SEEMED TO MOVE" (*p.* 34).

Never again shall you challenge your mates to battle, or call to the tender-eyed cow. That last bullet has told. Stagger forward—so—stand still. Make one more effort—you can't? Then look me straight in the face with those brave, defiant eyes of yours, and take my last message right in the midst of that proud curly forehead. Now fall, as the great should fall, without sigh and without groan. And I—I am only a poor pitiable murderer, afraid even now to approach your poor carcase, for fear the strength which was your glory should still be in you—for fear that life should not even yet be extinct, and that you should seek your revenge. Pity the world was not large

enough for both of us. Lie still there on that rocky ledge; the yellow wattle flowers will fall on you as they fade and drop—was ever velvet pall woven so fine as they? I can see you now—I shall see you to my dying day—and the remembrance of that last gallop will make my heart beat, whilst my very dreams will echo the clatter of my horse's hoofs on the stony ridge as I came up with you.

Now let's lend a hand at yarding the rest. That cow is a fiend—we shall never yard her. Be ready to shoot her if you get the chance.

She broke at the yard. It was forest-land, the light of the moon as broad as daylight, and I went after her—Cæsar and I. We were just a neck's length in front of her, and when she propped we propped; but she did not turn—she charged!

From the brightness of light into darkness unutterable—from the frenzy of motion into the quiet of the grave! They shot Cæsar where he lay—they carried me home.

91035

WESTERN AUSTRALIA: ITS RISE AND PROGRESS.

Discovery of the Colony—Settlement—Early Difficulties—The Convict System—Jubilee—Land Fever—The Rush to Kimberley—Agitation for Self-Government—Exploration.

UP to a comparatively recent date there appears to have been some doubt as to who were the first Europeans who visited the western portion of the great Australian continent; but it is now generally accepted that the Portuguese nation may claim the honour of providing the first visitor to Western Australia, for we find that Menezes, when exploring the Indian Ocean in 1527, sighted a part of the west coast. The discovery of this colony may, however, be divided into seven portions. In 1616 the north-western coast was visited by Dirk Hartog in the ship *Endracht*, and was called by him the Land of Concord. On some of the old maps it is marked Endracht Land. In 1619 Jan Edels visited Shark's Bay and a portion of the land south of that locality, and gave his name to it. Leeuwin Land, embracing the south-western portion of the coast, was made by a Dutch vessel in 1622. It received its name from the vessel, and the south-west cape bears the designation of Cape Leeuwin. Five years later that portion of the coast lying between Cape Leeuwin and the south-west of South Australia was named Nuyts Land, after a passenger on board the *Gulde Zeefart*, then on its way to Japan. In 1628 the land lying to the north of Endracht Land was named by De Witt after himself; and sixteen years afterwards Abel Tasman, the discoverer of Van Diemen's Land, visited and gave his name to the north coast of Western Australia. In 1665 the colony was named New Holland by the Dutch. Thirty-two years later Vlaming visited the coast lying between Edels and Leeuwin Lands and named it Swan River, on account of the black swans he discovered on it—a name which is often erroneously applied to the entire colony.

The whole of the West Australian coast had by this time been discovered, and it now remained for a more careful exploration to be made, as far as circumstances would admit, not only of the coast, but of the interior also. Accordingly we find that, between the years 1697 and 1826, when the first settlement was established, various expeditions were despatched for the purpose of surveying the western region of the Australian continent; and such names as Archipelago of the Recherche, King George's Sound, Point d'Entrecasteaux, Géographe Bay, Dampier Archipelago, and a host of others, are all associated with these undertakings. By the year 1826 a considerable amount of information had been gained by both English and French respecting Western Australia, and the latter were so far satisfied with the result of their labours that they determined to plant a colony there. In this design they were, however, anticipated by Lieutenant-General Darling, the Governor of New South Wales, who despatched Major Lockyer with a detachment of the 39th Regiment and a party of convicts to take possession of King George's Sound, which was erected into a dependency of New South Wales. That province may, therefore, be considered in a sense the parent of Western Australia, as well as of Victoria and Queensland.

In the following year Sir James (then Captain) Stirling visited Swan River in the *Success*, and, as the result of his investigations, Lieutenant-General Darling recommended the English Government to found a settlement in that locality. Two years later, on June 1st, Captain Stirling, his staff (consisting of eight persons), and about thirty others, with farming implements, and a small number of large stock, pigs and poultry, arrived in the transport *Parmelia* at Fremantle. A few months prior to their arrival Captain Fremantle, of H.M.S. *Challenger*, had taken formal possession of the colony in the name of the English Government, and hoisted the British flag at the port which now bears his name. The 1st of June is, however, recognised as the date on which the foundation of the colony took place, and its anniversary is always observed as a public holiday by the entire community. A week afterwards H.M.S. *Sulphur* came with a military detachment, and during the remaining six months of the year some seventeen or eighteen other vessels arrived, bringing settlers, stores, stock, agricultural implements, &c., for the settlement of Swan River, as the district was then called. According to the official records, the white population at the end of the year numbered 850 souls; and there were the following head of stock: cattle, 204; horses, 57; sheep, 1,096; and pigs, 106. Over a thousand immigrants came in the following year, bringing with them property to the amount of nearly £15,000, having been attracted by the liberal grants of land offered by the Home Government in return for the introduction of property.

The first Governor of the settlement was Captain Stirling, who was assisted by a Board of Council and Audit to administer affairs. Instructions were given by the Imperial Government to dispose of the land to those who had availed themselves of the handsome offers which had been made to induce settlement, and to this end expeditions of survey and investigation were undertaken into the country in the vicinity of Perth, Fremantle, and Guildford, and a number of the new settlers became large landholders. Unfortunately this liberality was not attended with such beneficial results as were anticipated. Notwithstanding that the offers made proved sufficient to lead to the investment of much capital, and the emigration from England and elsewhere of a number of settlers, the method of settlement adopted resulted in the dispersion of the new-comers over the central and southern areas, instead of their concentration in one or two small districts. Hence arose great difficulties of communication, and the means of transit were correspondingly limited. The roads (save the mark!) were mere tracks in the forest, often almost impassable; and the bush was not only unfamiliar, but infested with natives, who, having outgrown a good deal of their fear of the white man, revenged themselves upon him in true savage manner. Their attitude was uncompromisingly hostile, and besides attacking the whites, and cruelly murdering a good many of them, they committed a large number of depredations upon the settlers' property. The story of the atrocities perpetrated by these horrible savages is a sickening one, and the settlers felt almost powerless to defend themselves against their attacks. Indeed, in 1832 the depredations and aggressions of the natives had reached such a pitch that in June of that year a public meeting was held, at which resolutions were passed in favour of abandoning the settlement unless more active measures were pursued by the Government in the

protection of life and property. The more stringent means then adopted were to a certain extent effectual; but the settlers continued to suffer largely from their savage neighbours.

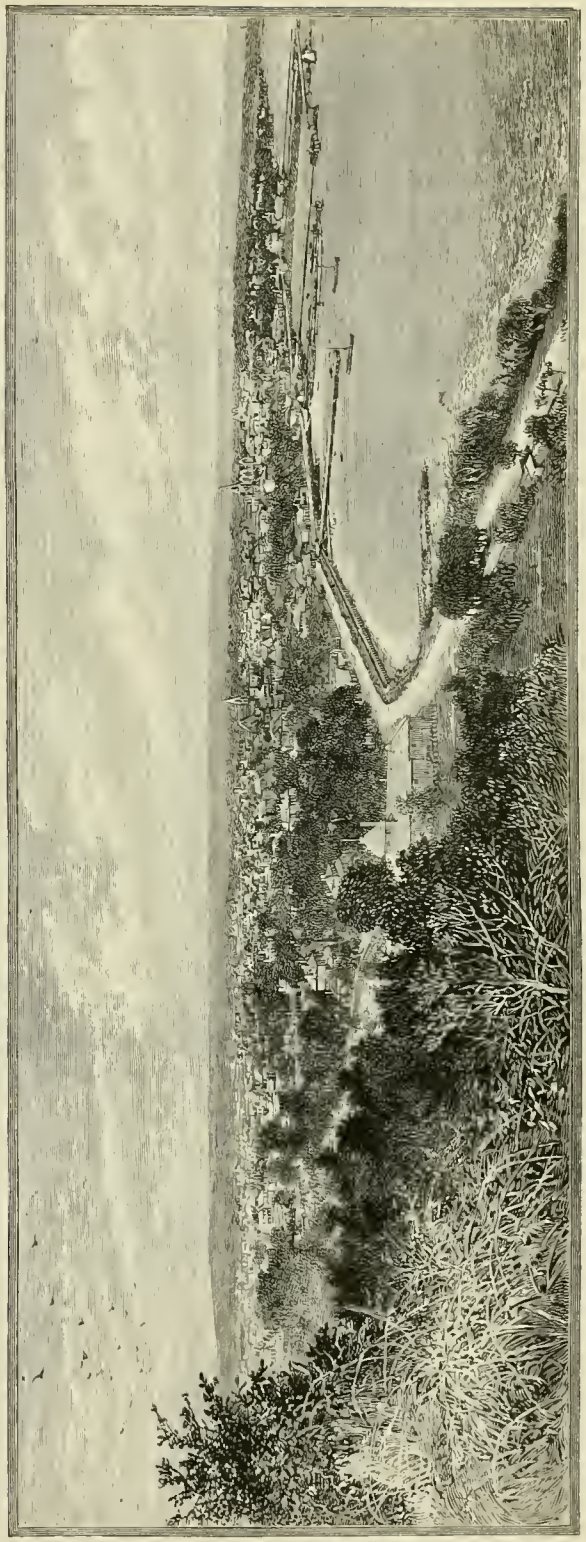
In addition to this grievance, the relations between the employers and labourers from various causes fell into a most unhappy state, the natural result of which was that labour became both scarce and expensive. Food likewise ran short, partly owing to the inadequate arrangements which had been made for the reception and support of immigrants, and partly because, after a time, vessels ceased to arrive at Fremantle, owing to the lack of proper harbour accommodation, which gave the port a bad name.

THE SWAN RIVER, SIX MILES ABOVE PERTH.

Metallic money was seldom met with. These and other causes greatly impeded the progress of the settlement; and, as may be supposed, the result was disastrous. Not only was immigration suspended, but many of the best class of settlers grew discouraged with the state of affairs, and took the first chance which offered itself of removing, with their capital and movable belongings, to the other colonies. Those who remained dragged on an existence which was truly pitiable, many of the poorer class subsisting almost entirely upon dandelions, wild nettles, and native roots. Attempts were made by the Government in various directions to ameliorate the condition of the settlers, but the causes of their poverty continued more or less in operation till the year 1848. In that year the colonists, utterly hopeless of improving their condition under the existing depressed state of affairs, commenced an agitation in favour of the introduction of convicts. It was felt that, could satisfactory arrangements be made with the Home Government for the introduction of that class of men, the resulting benefits to the colony would be almost incalculable, and that the

evil effects of their presence in the community would be greatly outbalanced by the labour they would supply, and the expenditure of imperial funds they would give rise to. The expectations of the colonists were not disappointed. In 1850 the British Government gave effect to their request; and in June of that year a system of transportation was commenced which continued up to 1868. During that period nearly ten thousand convicts were received into the colony, the cost of their maintenance and supervision being borne by the imperial authorities.

The effect of the system was, regarded as a whole, beneficial, and by many was held to be the salvation of the colony. Communication between the country districts and the seaboard was established by roads and bridges, most of which were constructed by convict labour, thus affording the settlers at last a means of transit for their produce. The maintenance of the convicts created a demand for a new market, which, in its turn, necessitated a larger supply of stock and produce. Then, again, the Home Government had agreed with the colonists to supplement the arrival of the convicts with the introduction of an equal number of free immigrants, of whom over seven thousand were sent. A military force was also stationed in the colony. Thus the products of the colony were increased, labour became plentiful, an extensive and prosperous trade was established, and in every respect the prospects of the community were brighter and more hopeful than ever they had been before. And



PERTH.

although, as time went on, the men were released from prison and dispersed through the population on "tickets-of-leave," and the effect of their presence in the community was found not to be unmixed with evil; though settlers were, to a certain extent, exposed to lawlessness, and an element of disquietude was infused into society; though the evil influence even extended itself to the native races, now tolerably quiet, and also caused Western Australia to fall into sad disfavour with her neighbours, who had outgrown most of the results and almost all recollection of similar systems; yet those who maintained that convictism proved the salvation of Western Australia from utter ruin could say much to justify themselves; and, at all events, the dismal forebodings which were at one time indulged respecting its influence upon the moral and social condition of the community were never realised. So far from that, to quote the words of the late Mr. Sheriff Knight, "The release in this colony of men trained by their prison experience to regard rectitude of conduct as the only sure road to the attainment of success in life has had no contaminating influence on the social condition of the community; and hence, after the absorption of so large a proportion of the convict element, the colony enjoys a high state of social order. . . . Great numbers of the convict class have become holders of property, and are thus interested in the observance of law and the preservation of good order."

In 1879, on the 1st of June, the jubilee of the colony was celebrated amid universal rejoicing, the chief feature of the demonstration being the turning of the first sod of the Eastern Railway. The ceremony was performed by Sir Harry Ord, at that time Governor of the colony, amid the most enthusiastic demonstrations of satisfaction. The first section of the line was opened nearly two years later. Towards the close of 1879 the colonists were gratified by the announcement of the discovery of the rich pastoral country of Kimberley by Mr. Alexander Forrest's exploring expedition, and the promise it held out of becoming a splendid field for the pastoralist has been amply fulfilled. The year 1881 witnessed the opening of the Perth International Exhibition—the first ever held in the colony—promoted by Messrs. Joubert and Twopeny, the projectors of similar exhibitions elsewhere. The exhibition, at which Europe, Asia, and the neighbouring colonies were well represented, proved an undoubted success, and did much to bring Western Australia to the fore. But amongst the events of that year, such as the introduction of immigrants from England, the connection of Western Australia with London and Singapore by a direct line of steamers, &c., the authorisation to the Government by the Legislature to enter into contracts for the construction of railways upon the land-grant system stands pre-eminent. The late Mr. Anthony Hordern, representing a syndicate of English capitalists, offered to construct a line of rail between Beverley and Albany, and to introduce a certain number of immigrants yearly, in return for a concession of 12,000 acres of land per mile. The negotiations between the representatives of the Government and Mr. Hordern's syndicate were carried on into the next year, and at the close of 1884 a definite agreement was arrived at between the parties. 1884 was marked by an amount of general prosperity in many directions exceeding that known for years past, notwithstanding the depression in trade beyond the limits of the colony. During that year the "land-fever"

made its appearance, and although the results which followed two years later were anything but satisfactory, the sudden scarcity of money being due in a great measure to it, the speculation in Western Australian land assisted in bringing the colony prominently before capitalists in the eastern colonies, and was an excellent advertisement.

In 1883 the rush to the Kimberley gold-fields took place. Mr. Hardman's discoveries had been followed up by a number of old miners who prospected the district, the result being the find of gold in what promised to be payable quantities, and from the eastern provinces a large number of men fairly flooded the place. The West Australians who essayed their luck in the same direction were comparatively few in number. The expense of getting to the fields, and also the warnings uttered by the newspaper press to wait until the rainy season had filled the dry creeks and pools with the necessary water for "washing," were sufficient to deter most of the people from making a rush to the fields, even if they had not already been rendered cautious by the fact that, like the cry of "Wolf," the cry of "Gold" had in the past been too often raised for them to pay much heed to it. The experiences of the latter part of the year justified the wisdom of this course. Arriving at the Kimberley at the "fag-end" of the wet season the miners (many of whom had made their way to the fields with wheelbarrows) at first were very successful; but when the dry weather succeeded, their earnings rapidly decreased, and in the end the greater part of them left the fields thoroughly disgusted with them. But although it now seems probable that the surface-alluvial claims will, save in a few instances, hardly pay for their working, there appears every reason to hope that, with the employment of capital, rich veins of quartz may be struck which will prove a profitable investment.

If the Kimberley as a gold-field has not fulfilled expectations, other events have occurred which to the more southern portion of the colony promise great and important results. The telegraph and railway systems have been extended, other public works of an important nature are in course of construction, and the same onward movement is noticeable in matters political. The question of the introduction of a form of government similar to the constitutions of the neighbouring colonies has for some time occupied a large share of public attention. Up to the present time responsible government has been little more than a sound. Now, however, there are signs of a more intelligent interest in public affairs, and it is hoped (and not without reason, too) that before long the colonists will be in a position to convince the authorities of Downing Street that they are capable of conducting the administration of their colony upon lines similar to those in the other Australias. The cry that has been raised so long, that there are not men in the colony possessed of the means and the leisure to undertake to carry on the government of the country, will not be repeated much longer, and the speedy introduction of the form of government adopted by the other colonies will remove from Western Australia the reproach which is often levelled at her of being a semi-Crown colony.

In this bird's-eye view of the colony's history, only casual mention has been made of the work of Western Australian exploration; but it is desirable, perhaps,

that a brief summary of what has been done in that way should be given. Passing over the work performed prior to 1829 to that which has been done since the foundation of the colony, and which is vastly more interesting, we find that from the beginning the utmost enthusiasm was exhibited in investigating the territory. From the Governor down to the labouring man, everyone was ready to take a part in the various expeditions which were carried out; and for the first year or two small parties were sent out, who surveyed the country lying in the vicinity of Perth and Fremantle. During the next five or six years the eastern and southern districts were explored—parties starting from Perth eastward and southward, and from Albany northward. In

NEWCASTLE.

1837 Lieutenant (afterwards Sir George) Grey made the first attempt to explore the north-west coast; but, failing in this undertaking, he made a second trial in 1838–9. He succeeded in exploring the seaboard from Sharks' Bay to the mouth of the Gascoyne, but was compelled to discontinue his investigation, owing to the severe losses sustained in boats and stores by storms—the "willy-willy" of the north-west; and, after enduring terrible privations and sufferings, his party (or rather its remains) found its way to Perth in a very exhausted condition. During this lengthy journey Grey passed over the country lying between the Murchison in the north and the Swan, and subsequently described it. In the year 1840 Mr. Eyre (afterwards Governor of Jamaica) started from Port Lincoln, South Australia, and journeyed westward along the sea-coast as far as Albany, the journey occupying nearly thirteen months. In 1848 Mr. A. C. Gregory explored the country about the Murchison, where he discovered lead and copper; and the following year valuable surveys were made by Mr. J. S. Roe, the Surveyor-General, in the southern and south-eastern parts of the colony. In 1854 a surveyor named Robert Austin examined the country east and north of York as far as the Murchison, and three years later a further expedition to the last-named district

and the Gascoyne was undertaken by F. H. Gregory, resulting in the opening of an overland route to the north-west. In 1861 the same explorer examined the rivers of the north-west coast, which led to its settlement a couple of years later. In 1869 Mr. John Forrest, the present Surveyor-General, started eastward from Champion Bay, and penetrated nearly three thousand miles into the interior; and the following year he performed the arduous and difficult journey from Albany to Eucla by the coast. In 1871 his brother, Mr. Alexander Forrest, examined the country lying between the 117th and 124th meridians, from near the 30th to the 34th degrees of latitude. Three years later Mr. John Forrest performed his memorable feat of crossing with horses the centre of the colony from the Murchison to the northern telegraph line of South Australia; and in the same year Colonel Warburton, with his camels, arrived at Roebourne from a journey which began in South Australia, and lay right across the desert lands of the two colonies. In 1879 Mr. Alexander Forrest conducted his expedition across the country north and east, from the De Grey river in the north-west to the Adelaide and Port Darwin telegraph line. It was during this trying journey that he discovered the magnificent Kimberley district.

Much yet remains to be done, for a comparatively small portion of the interior is known, all the settled parts lying along the sea-board and a few hundred miles inland. The Governments of Western and South Australia are, however, always ready to assist each other as far as possible in exploring the unknown regions which separate their settled districts, and by degrees what is at present a sealed book to the colonists will unfold its leaves, and the capabilities of this half of the great continent be made fully known.

It may be added that among the most striking memorials in the colony of the convict system is the Town Hall at Perth, an imposing structure capable of holding 2,000 persons, and which was built entirely by convict labour. The city itself is pleasantly placed on the north bank of the Swan River. Newcastle, of which a view is given on the opposite page, is situatsd on the Avon, some fifty-four miles north-east of the capital. It is a rising town; and, notwithstanding the scarcity of fresh water, the opinion of some not incompetent to judge is that the place has a future before it.

A BUSH-FIRE.

A Sombre Scene—Up Hill and Down—A Talk with a Selector—A Fight for Life and a Terrible Ride.

FOLLOWING up the trail of a bush-fire one morning in late April, I left in my rear blackened deadwood: trees standing gaunt and stumpy—branches velvety in their blackness where the fierce tongues of flame had licked their gleaming sides, with portions left ghastly in their whiteness, the swift-rushing fires having overlooked them in their haste; trees rising up against the clear morning sun-rays, or getting lost in the low-spreading morning mist (it was very near winter-time in Victoria, and the mornings and evenings were chilly, and filled with mystery); trees rising from foregrounds of damp white ashes, with fern-stalks black and bare, and small branches stripped of leafage—all this in patches, for the flames had taken eccentric and kangaroo-like boundings, passing ferns and rushes, which still are fresh and green, to batten upon and denude selected spots. Where the ground is clothed, the trees shoot up ninety or one hundred feet with gnarled and twisted limbs gleaming like ivory against the still flourishing young varieties of eucalyptus; but where only ashes remain, fires are still smouldering, like red ulcers eating into the hearts of fallen giants, while the blue and fragrant smoke is mingling with the damp greys of the morning mists.

The fragrant perfume, as the light smoke is wafted towards me, seems like to the aroma of eucalyptus-laden incense; while we see the vast boles of white trees, with the shards of brown bark hanging downwards and breaking upon the grey tones, and here and there the velvety richness of the charred trunks, looking, as I pass through them, like mighty pillars of ivory and ebony. A little curl of vapour steals upwards as I walk past; it comes from the heart of a great tree, thirty feet in circumference and over two hundred feet high. At the foot all is desolation and the ruin of dead ashes; four or five detached portions of that mighty girth seem to clutch at the bare ash-covered earth with their charred and irregular feelers, and within the centre, in a cavity like a cupola with a lurid vault of vermilion, the fire is eating slowly but steadily upwards, and the great gum must sooner or later fall. How it still stands with only those slender supports under all those tons of timber it is hard to conceive; yet there it is, straight and pure, above that jet-black base, like the mast of a ship. One hundred feet it is before the first limb breaks from that symmetrical line. All its leaves and branches are still upon the lofty crown—branches spread, and leaves still sucking nourishment from the untouched pith. I gaze upon this pitiful sight, and pause with my knapsack on my back to look round upon this tremendous cemetery of dead timber. Mile beyond mile the records of this last fire, and of the fires which have gone before, stretch before and around me. Man with his axe will ring and destroy all that the devastating element has spared. How sad it seems that this fair primeval forest must succumb to the advance of civilisation; yet better the valley of dry bones in this most gracious land than the hungry mouths at home.

It is the great Forest of Lorne that I am passing through to-day—from Lorne,

nestling in its hill-shelter, with the sounds of breaking waves ever grinding on the shore. It has been all uphill work so far, through roads ankle-deep in dust, yet pleasant beyond expression; the great stillness only broken by the chatter of parrots, the screams of cockatoos, or the wild laughter of the laughing jackass. At times I hear the crack of a bullock-driver's whip, followed by his deep resonant oath, too far distant to be intelligible; or the stroke of a woodman's axe, followed by the whirr and smashing of the falling sapling. The sun is hot as I tramp up the hill with my load, and I am walking fast, so as to make my sketches and reach Big Hill before night comes on. I have a new chum's horror of snakes, and keep to the roadways as the safest part; yet I afterwards learnt that in my ignorance I had taken the snakes' favourite track, for they revel in dusty roadways.

As I ascend, peeps of distant ranges appear over and between the trees—dense forest ranges and fern-gullies, with the vapours of dying fires giving to them a blue, hazy atmosphere—blue-green to the richest autumnal varieties of russet and saffron—with the thin smoke like the purple haze of autumn afternoons at home. Heaths and native flowers line the wayside as I pass on, the flames having overlooked them or despised them as insignificant: ferns and reeds, mosses, tendrils, lichens, supple-jacks, the *Clematis aristata* (creeping along and festooning the shining barks of tall trees), the honeysuckle with its tuft-like head, wattles and blackthorn, ivy (which thrives in Australia, like the sparrow and the rabbit), sarsaparilla running over the blackened ground and hiding the traces of disaster, rushes (broad-leaved and hard, or rapier-like in their fineness, with stems rising six and eight feet from the green-grey tufts), orchids of all descriptions, and tree-ferns, with their brown stems, and spreading out, umbrella-fashion, their rich green fronds under straight, white gum-trunks. At every turn of the bush-track something lovely reveals itself, and compensates for the bareness of the fire-touched parts beyond.

I am hot and tired with walking, and sit to rest and sketch. The afternoon sun-ray pours along the path, and gleams on white stems and rich green foliage; the willow-like leaves of the gum-trees droop and turn their edges to the ray, and represent themselves by straight lines. Within the gullies deep shadows lie, and on the under-wood and heather hang purple vapours. As I work in quiet, soft rustlings sing above; and as I move sharp rustlings strike amongst the grasses. A glint of light follows the vanishing of a tiger- or black-snake—I know not which, and do not care to inquire; and while the light grows more golden I feel it is time to be moving, for a bushman riding past informs me I have five miles between me and shelter; so, packing up, I take the road once more, through the gathering shadows and the mellow beams of the setting sun.

As I trudge along, the phantasmagoria of colour rapidly develops—glimpses of sky through sombre aisles of trees, with clouds crimson, orange, and intense purple; a light like burnished gold beyond me, swiftly swallowed up in murky fumes. Going down hill I come upon the white tents of road-makers gleaming against deep masses of tree-shadows, and behind the shrubbery (their good fire crackling and throwing out Rembrandt lights and darks) workmen, forming picturesque groups as they watch their

billies over the flames. One stalwart woodman, with a few deft axe-blows, brings a young tree down with a crash. An interval of false light ensues, when mists rise up silvery and fold around the trees a thin lustre. The white trunks in mid-distance are salmon-tinted and tenderly soft, and shadow seems to be subdued in that magical half-light. Corot revelled in such tones of mystery. As I near my destination, a weird after-glow waits on me, with a sky full of subtle gradations and wonderful shapes in silhouette.

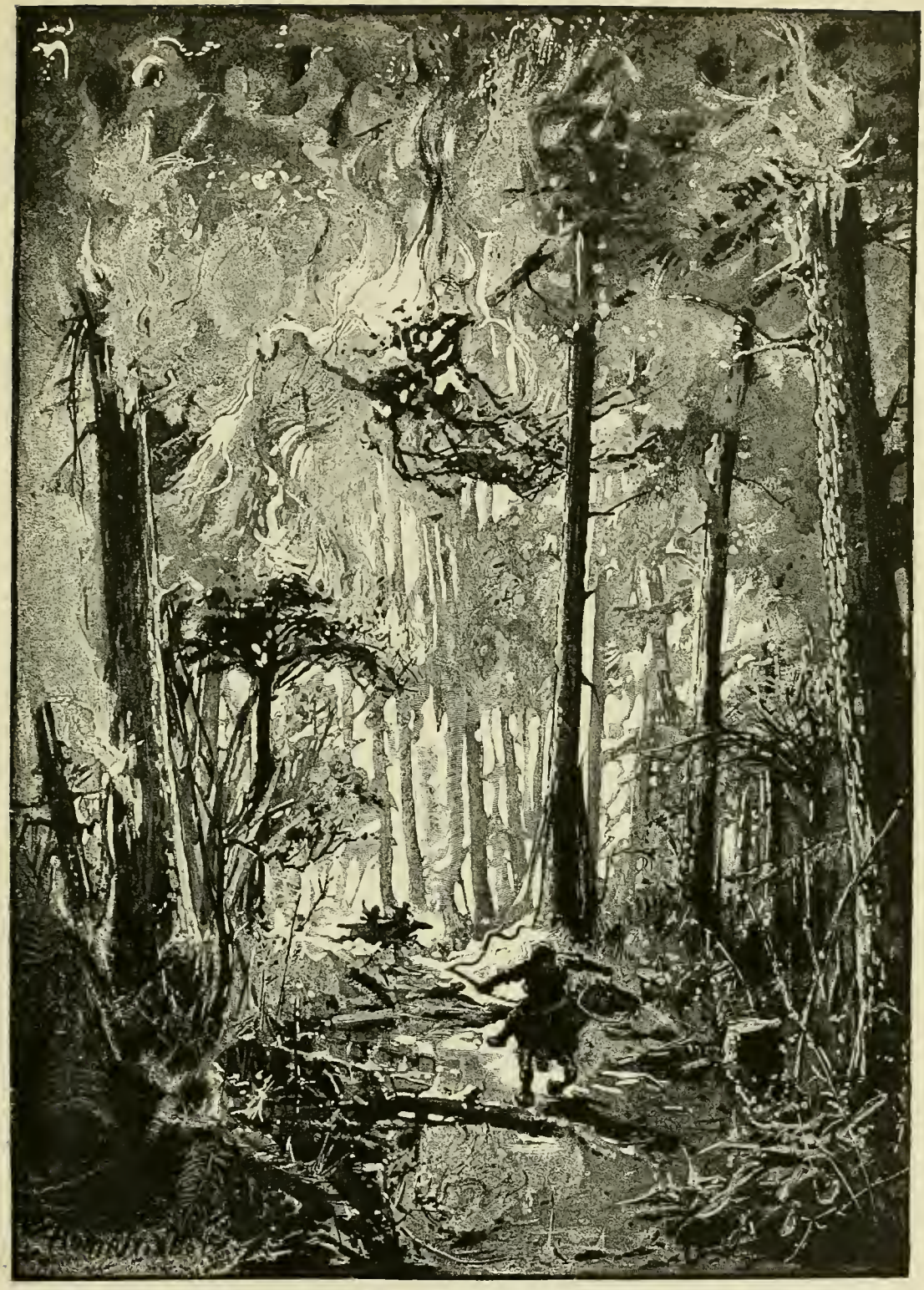
A FERN GULLY.

The roadway stretches before me—vague brown-grey, with distinct lines of darkness on either side. I walk up to the selector's hut, where I intend to ask shelter. A glow of light within welcomes me as I cross the threshold, and, with true Victorian hospitality, I am offered a chair while the mistress of the establishment piles on a fresh supply of dried logs; then comes the sense of comfort and well-earned rest.

The selector is a man well advanced in life, who has been six years on his land. Five strong sons assist him in his labours of clearing, and he tells me he has spent over a thousand pounds already on his ground. A thousand pounds and six years' hard labour, and yet there is little to show, for it is a stubborn Nature that he seeks to conquer; but he is content, for, as he says, "This land is mine."

And what a domain! I walk round next morning with the old man, who is rough-clad and almost ragged, and as he waves his hand carelessly over mountain and gully, saying, "Yes, as far as you can see it is my land," I feel that he is the lord of a paradise of beauty.

He takes me down his fern-gully until daylight is lost, and only a green twilight filters through the interlacing fronds—useless ground, he tells me; yet he is proud of its magnificence. A natural spring bubbles up through a rock basin, and trickles down, a moss-lined stream of water, cool and clear. Then we pass up to the few acres which he has redeemed from the dense forest. Here his money and time have been engulfed, and as yet there is little return. But the man is working with certainty for the future, though not his own future, for it is but for his children and grand-children that he is toiling.



RIDING THROUGH THE BLAZING BUSH.

"How do you find the money for all this?" I inquire as a prelude to the question which engrosses my mind.

"Little suffices to keep us here after the first year; we grow our own vegetables, and find enough to feed our pigs with and a cow or two. All we require to purchase is flour, sugar, and tea; £7 or £8 sterling a year will do for that, and we don't bother about clothes, as you may see. To do this, the first year we work out, become shearers or road-makers, and with the money we make in that way we buy food, implements, and seed; at our off-time we do what we can to our own ground. Sometimes over a road-contract we may save £20 or £30 after a month's hard work. Then we purchase what we want and go into clearing once more till that is spent, and so on. It is slow work, but it is sure—a little planting, a little clearing, keeping down the new growth of scrub. Comfort gradually takes the place of hardships, and as years go by, the money we have spent and the labour we have expended will return to us; and all the time we toil we have the feeling that we are our own landlords and independent."

"But it is tremendous work for you."

"Yes; I, for my part, won't get much benefit from this speculation, beyond the luxury of being my own master, and the sentiment of the affair."

"And your five sons—are they content with this life and these far-off prospects?"

My host grew gloomy all at once. "Ay, that's the bother; if I died to-morrow they would sell it all off and try somewhere else." The old man's heart was set in his land. He would have liked to keep it in his family; for, being a Scotchman, land is to him something to be tender about and to cling to. The Englishman grows sentimental over the friends of his youth; but the Scotchman worships the soil, and makes friends of landmarks.

I looked round on the gigantic rings of gums still standing up from the bright green sward where the cows were grazing, to the unredeemed forest, where distance was checked by the density of timber and scrub—a little patch of clearing in a world of lavish primeval loveliness. Between two dipping ranges was to be caught a vista of Lake Murdeduke and Mount Hesse, nearly forty miles away, with reaches of colour-undulations between the mountain and the cleared hill upon which I stood. As one looked upon the slab railing which enclosed the selection, representing months of hard labour; on the stumps of cut-down and fired trees; on the fallen timber cumbering the ground, and the young life springing rapidly up, which will not be kept down; on the rough log-hut with its surroundings — all indications of hercnlean work; and then on the old man, scamed and gnarled, who laboured thus without hope and sacrificed his life without consciousness—it was impossible to help feeling that the days of heroism are not yet gone. But it is time to learn something about the fire, and I open the ball by remarking, "You have had a great fire here lately?"

"Ah! you ought to have been here last week to have seen a sight; and the sky as black as night with the rolling smoke; it was all round us, blazing and roaring like thunder."

"How ever did you manage to escape?"

"Well, you see, this is how it was. Three of my sons were away, Irrewarra

direction, and they could not get to us to help; but the two youngest were at home, and my daughter Fanny. So telling the wife to keep inside, and shut all doors and windows, I stuck on the housetop, and Fanny stood on the ground, while the boys carried water from the spring down there for me to put out the sparks and blazing bits of wood as they dropped."

The spring was about half a mile from the house, straight up and down a steep hillside.

"How did you sleep?"

"We didn't bother about sleeping while the fire was near us. For two days and a night it was close by, and we had to work very hard; then it raced past our quarters, and all the danger lay in the wind changing, but it didn't. Otherwise we were safe enough, the land being clear all round, only for the smoke and heat."

"That would be awful?"

"Like the blast from a furnace, and suffocation besides. Fanny, poor lass! went dead off two or three times, and sometimes fell asleep, but a spark dropping on her woke her up quick enough, and we could not let her go to rest, for we were short-handed."

"Your sons at Irrewarra would be in a dreadful state?"

"Yes, a bit uneasy. They had tried to join us two or three times, but were driven back. On the second night I saw them riding through the flames and sparks, and knew we were all right then. You should have seen the lads galloping to us over there"—he pointed through the forest towards Dean's Marsh as he spoke. "There they were, with the black bare trees between them and us, and behind them sparks dropping from the thick smoke like a hailstorm, and under their horses' flying hoofs blazing logs and sputtering branches. When I first saw them they were about thirty yards from the house. I could hear them 'coo-ey' as they came on, and answered to show that we were alive and all well. Fanny woke up to new life at the sounds and began to laugh; and Jack and Tom stood, with their empty buckets in their hands, looking out upon that moving curtain of crimson smoke, with the falling sparks and blazing bits like coloured fireworks—all blue, red, and yellow, and the running tongues of flame that licked along the ground. Ah! it was a grand sight. Then we saw, all of a moment, the three horsemen and horses break from the crimson and scarlet-dotted curtain, all black as sweeps. They were yelling loud cheers and waving their hats, and then we knew that all was right."

"That must have been an awful ride through the blazing bush?"

"Ay! they hadn't much hair about them when they got our length, or skin either; but they were anxious, you see, and couldn't rest at Irrewarra while we might be burning here. Besides, bush-lads don't mind a little trouble or danger: they are used to it."

To the foregoing account of a bush-fire it may be as well to append an extract from a speech by Bishop Moorhouse in which the subject is handled. In the month of January, 1886, Dr. Moorhouse received through the Governor of the Colony an offer from the Queen's Ministers of the See of Manchester. At that time he was taking

a month's holiday at a little secluded place upon the shores of the Southern Ocean; and during that same month he was eye-witness of a great Australian bush-fire.

"I was a spectator," said the Bishop at a meeting in Melbourne, "of the bush-fire in the Heytesbury Forest, for it reached the place where I was staying about two or three hours before the change of wind and the subsequent rain stopped it. We were not in any danger at Airey's Inlet, because we had nothing before us but a little fern and grass, which we might at any time have fired if there had been need. But although we had a sense of security, a more awe-inspiring spectacle than that I never beheld.

"I STUCK ON THE HOUSETOP AND FANNY STOOD ON THE GROUND."

Over our heads, covering the sky to landward and very considerably to seaward, there was a great dusky cloud like a canopy, which was low and black and threatening, and almost seemed solid, as if it might fall down upon us and suffocate everything beneath it. Under that dark canopy I saw the fire make its final leap across the last timber-crowned ridge. Now I have seen bush-fires frequently; I have had to pass through more than one, but anything like that I never saw. It was a great solid sheet of flame, reaching from the ground to the top of the highest trees, roaring, crackling, hurling forth *avant-coureurs* of destruction, great pieces of burning bark and flaming twigs, as if it were its mission to actually sweep from the face of the earth everything that lived. I never was more astonished than when I read as I did that many of the selectors, girded round in their small clearings by that solid wall of flames, had saved their lives. It must have been because of the greenness of their crops, and because

of their own calm courage. Just about an hour after the wind changed, a woman and several children came wildly flying for shelter to the house where I was. They had stopped on their selection as long as they dared; and though they reached us uninjured, there was a strange gleam of excitement in the mother's eyes as she said to me, 'Oh, sir, it was like coming through a burning fiery furnace.' These people, fortunately for themselves, lived near the sea, and it was only about an hour, or two hours, after their flight that suddenly the wind veered round from the north to the south, and so blew back the fire across the burning district, and saved their home and their property."

MAIN STREET, SILVERTON.

THE BROKEN HILL SILVER MINE.

The Line to Broken Hill—Cockburn—Silverton—A Happy Discovery—A Company Formed—Enormous Profits—Speculation—Too Much Dust and Too Little Water—How Time is Kept—Saturday Night—Pleasure and Business—In the Mine—Smelting.

THIS famous mine is one of the wonders of Australasia. Indeed, there are not many silver mines in the world, if there be one, which can eclipse it in size or in richness of ore. Although it is in the colony of New South Wales, South Australia reaps most benefit from it, for through her territory passes the bullion from the mine, and everything required for use at the works. From Mannahill the railway passes on to Cockburn, on the border, and there connects with what is known as the "tram-line." But it is a tram in name only, for the rolling stock of the South Australian Railways runs on from Cockburn, through Silverton, to Broken Hill.

The "tramway," it should be said, owes its existence to the fact that the Government of New South Wales declined to construct a railway which would serve no other purpose than that of adding to the wealth of the sister colony. Now, by law railways are not allowed to be in the hands of private companies. A tramway, could not, however, be objected to; and so it came about that a company was formed, the work was before long accomplished, and the necessary arrangements were made to allow of the use of the South Australian locomotives and carriages.

Thus a wonderful change has taken place in the manner of covering the distance between the Banier and Adelaide. In the past the mail-coaches occupied fourteen days in performing the journey. Goods were carried in bullock-drays; they were three months on the road, and were charged for at the rate of £20 per ton. To-day the journey of 333 miles is accomplished in nineteen hours. Since the completion of the intercolonial railways, it is possible to leave Brisbane and reach Broken Hill, *viâ*

Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide, without being obliged to stay a night in any one of the three last-mentioned capitals.

On arriving at Cockburn, the first signs of a large mining industry present themselves in the shape of huge piles of coke and timber and loaded trucks, some of which have just arrived from Broken Hill laden with bullion, while others are journeying towards it with stores and fuel and timber. Silverton is a town which can now count its houses and its population by hundreds, though the other day, as it were, the only building to be seen was one ugly stone house set in a country stocked with sheep and sparsely inhabited

The silver mine is seventeen miles further on. With the Pinnacles (a range of hills consisting of isolated peaks hundreds of feet in height) on the right hand, the rugged outline of the Broken Hill is seen against the clear blue sky. On nearer approach it is observed that the slopes of the hill are terraced, and upon these stand the buildings connected with the working of the mine. The hill-crest is a grotesquely irregular outcrop of ironstone, through which are sunk the three principal shafts, known as M'Culloch's, Jamieson's, and Rasp's. Half-a-dozen tall chimneys belch forth volumes of blackness over country that until now knew no other smoke than the light blue cloud rising from the camp-fire of the blackfellow or the squatter. Tall poles carry the wires used for telephonic and electric-lighting purposes, and at night the hill and surrounding country is thoroughly illuminated. The plain lying at the hill-foot is studded with hundreds of houses. This is the township of Broken Hill, and though an infant of not many months old, it contains a population of not less than 10,000 souls.

The wonderful change caused in the appearance of this portion of the country by the discovery of precious metal cannot be properly appreciated except by comparing the present with the past. The Broken Hill forms a landmark on a sheep-run known as Mount Gipps. Towards the end of September, 1883, the manager of the station gave orders for the sheep grazing in the vicinity of the hill to be mustered. Charles Rasp, an employee on the run, was one of the men sent to perform the work, and he, being possessed of eyes that saw and noted, was greatly struck with the mineral appearance and formation of Broken Hill. In conjunction with two contractors on the run, he applied for certain mineral leases, and, having secured them, mentioned the matter to William M'Culloch, manager and part owner of Mount Gipps. Rasp stated that he believed the bluff at the end of the hill to be a mass of tin! Other blocks were pegged out and applied for; and thus seven of them, nearly two miles in length, were secured on the line of reef. The interest in these blocks was then amalgamated, and the "Broken Hill Mining Company" came into registered existence. Eight months subsequently (during which time the work done had exposed only large bodies of comparatively lower-grade lead-ores, the richer iron and kaolin ores not having been tested) two of the original shareholders sold out their interest in the company. In 1884 the existence of chlorides was first noticed in Rasp's shaft, and the rich kaolin ore was accidentally discovered by an aboriginal employed by the company. On the 12th of August, 1885, the "Broken Hill Mining

Company" developed into the "Broken Hill Proprietary Company, Limited;" and it is worthy of remark that, from the day the mine was discovered up to the present time, nothing has arisen in any way to mar its progress. Success has followed success, and in this respect the mine is unique in the history of Australian mining ventures, if not in those of the world generally.

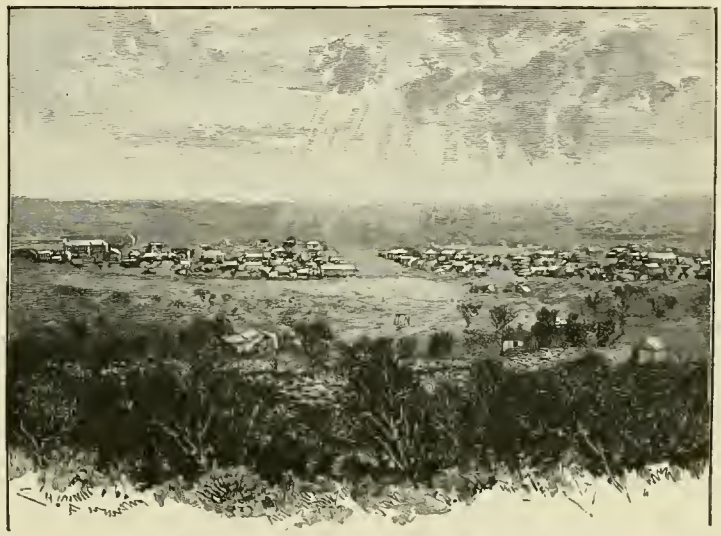
Stories are current touching the value in which the

THE BROKEN HILL MINE.

original shares were held by the owners. The owner of three is reported to have given one away, and to have sold a second for one or two hundred pounds sterling. He considered he had done a remarkably smart stroke of business in this last-named transaction; but probably he now wishes he had kept the scrip in his pocket. Each of those three shares is worth at the present moment £170,000, equal in the aggregate to £510,000. Again, it is said that, when playing cards, a share would be offered in lieu of current coin, and that in that light it was regarded with suspicion. The darkness of those men is now illuminated; but though they may regret having lost the chance of becoming millionaires in the space of four years, they yet have not much to complain of.

In share-broking some of the most insignificant transactions produced marvellous

results. Legends wild and strange gather about the mine so thickly that it becomes difficult to distinguish the false from the true. An office-boy is said to have speculated so successfully that, in less than a fortnight, he had netted considerably over £1,000. One man is alleged to have realised £7,000 in two months, and an auctioneer to have cleared £1,700 in four days. At that time the offices of the brokers were literally besieged, from early morning until late at night, by people wishing to invest. The value of township allotments in Broken Hill, or to speak accurately the value of the leases, has increased by leaps and bounds. The Government does not sell the land, yet the holders of leases of blocks in the best positions have disposed of them for almost fabulous sums. Those upon whom the duty devolved of naming the streets of the town are to be honoured for the fact that they gave them titles that are a change from the everlasting "Smith," "Thomson," "Eliza," and "Sarah Jane," streets of so many country towns. In place of these we have "Argent" Street, "Kaolin," "Oxide," "Chloride," "Galena," "Bullion," &c. But it must be confessed that their charm is more that of novelty than of beauty. During the summer months whirlwinds of dust fly along the thoroughfares, and make the resident raise the question whether life be worth living. The artizan class are here to the fore, and thrive lustily. The buildings are, for the most part, constructed of galvanised iron; it is the cheapest material to be had, and but little time is required to put it together.



TOWNSHIP OF BROKEN HILL FROM THE MINE.

As may naturally be supposed, the men largely outnumber the women, yet there are some of the gentler sex to be found here. Notices of more than one ladies' school appear in the columns of the local newspapers. Schools for boys have also been established, while men gain knowledge of good and evil at the bars of no less than forty-two "hotels." Two newspapers supply the people with intelligence of all kinds, while two theatres strive to keep them happy and amused.

One of the drawbacks to life at Broken Hill is dust; another, the want of water. There are no running streams of any description, and the water found in sinking the mines is salter than the sea. All that the townspeople have to depend upon is what is caught off the roofs of the houses, and off the surface of the ground. Rain is not of frequent occurrence, but when it does come it is very heavy, being the "tail end" of tropical storms. The flood-water is conserved in tanks excavated in the

ground, and here it lies exposed to the sun and dust. In order to render it innocuous for use in drinking, it is necessary to boil or filter it. Many persons have a pathetic belief in the efficacy of alcohol as a destroyer of germs, and these are careful to see that any water they may drink is thoroughly "purified." It is unfortunate that science should have discovered that some germs take as kindly to alcohol as do some human beings. Considering the scarcity of water, fifteenpence for a bath is not an extortionate charge. For this purpose salt water is used.

Visitors are greatly exercised in mind as to the keeping of time in Broken Hill. No less than three systems are in vogue—the solar, the railway, and the Government. Post-office time is regulated by Sydney; the railway runs on South Australian time, which is fifty minutes slower than Sydney; and then there is the great mine bell, which is supposed to be governed by the sun. The bell regulates the town, but he who would be in time to catch the train, or reach the post-office before it closes, must bear in mind these differences.

Hitherto sanitary regulations have been unknown. No wonder, then, that typhoid fever has fallen upon the place, and has been the cause of many deaths. After the horse has been stolen, the stable-door is to be carefully shut. There is no local government, but the townspeople have now instituted a species of vigilance society for the preservation of health. Great dissatisfaction has been expressed concerning the postal arrangements. The post-office is but little bigger than a large packing-case, and the means of delivering letters and despatching telegrams are necessarily limited in the extreme. On the same grounds that the New South Wales Government declined to construct a railway, they are dilatory in forwarding in any way the interests of the people. If they spend money, it simply benefits South Australia, and this they are not willingly prepared to do. The federation of the colonies is a stock subject with stump orators; its benefits are freely admitted; but where, as in the present instance, it is sought to be brought partially into operation, it assumes a different aspect. But it will come, nevertheless. So irritated did the townspeople become over these inconveniences that an indignation meeting was held, and a motion was passed to the effect that it was desirable to request the South Australian Government to annex that portion of New South Wales in which the silver-field is situated!

The townspeople follow the fashion set by Adelaide, Melbourne, and Sydney, of making Saturday night a time of festivity. The miners are paid on alternate Saturdays, and then the crowd is more jovial than ever. A complaint has been made by visitors that the place is too old for its years, that the people are too well-behaved and quiet. It would certainly have been no more than might have been expected had rowdyism prevailed, as it did in American silver-mining towns and on some Australian gold-fields. Let us be thankful that order reigns. At Broken Hill two police troopers are stationed, but life hangs heavily on their hands, for they have little to do. The crowd on Saturday night in the chief street, Argent Street, is made up, for the most part, of men and boys. It is a good-humoured, well, though not fashionably, dressed crowd, full of energy and life. The people stare into the windows of the many shops, large and small. There is

as yet, no gas, but kerosene lamps shed light upon the wares exposed for sale. Here and there, under the verandahs of hotels, knots of men assemble and discuss the one absorbing topic—mines and shares. A species of open-air stock exchange is instituted, and holders of shares in the latest "wild cat" syndicate shout out the amount at which they are prepared to allow less fortunate men the opportunity of making immense fortunes in a few days.

Quieter assemblages denote brokers. They are putting their heads together to the end that they may compose the prospectus of some mine that has yet to be found. Many of these are clever with their pens, and are endowed with great poetic and imaginative power. They will take a reef of ordinary stone, and prove that it contains some thousands of ounces of silver to the ton. The few women living in the town are as well posted in technical phrases, and the doings of the various mines, as any miner or share-broker of them all. In the hotels in this very quiet town are often to be found those who have drunk "not wisely but too well." They are to be heard singing at full pitch of voice, or to be seen reclined on the dusty roadway sleeping the dreamless sleep of the wine or spirit-bibber.

The crowd fills the street until a late hour of night, exchanging gossip, arguing, drinking good health and fortune one with another, and thus striving to break the dull monotony of their lives. There are no gardens about their homes, nor indeed is it likely that there ever will be, considering the scarcity of good water; and the surroundings of the town are simply rolling plains, treeless and without beauty, their broad expanse broken only here and there by bluffs and jagged peaks of rock.

The "Broken Hill Proprietary Company, Limited," was floated with £250,000, divided into 16,000 shares of £20 each. Of these, 14,000 shares were given to the original proprietors of the leases as payment for property, and 2,000 were offered to the public at £9 per share, to be considered as being paid up to £19 per share, there being a liability of £1 on all the shares. Monthly dividends of 20s. per share have been declared, and there is reason to believe that the company will be able to continue paying dividends of £1 per share per month for many years, and perhaps to increase the amount.

To thoroughly explore the mine would entail several days' labour, for the shafts, drives, levels, and adits may be measured in miles. In most mines the lodes are thought much of if they happen to be from nine to eighteen inches in width, but here they measure from twenty to one hundred and twenty *feet*. Masses of rich ore are to be seen on every side. The walls of the passages are formed of ironstone, silicates, manganese, carbonates, kaolin, and chlorides. All of these contain silver in greater or less quantities, but the chlorides are the richest of all, being nearly pure silver. At first, the real value of this ore was not understood, and it was thrown aside—only, however, to be quickly gathered up when the truth was known. Viewed in the light of the lamps, these underground chambers have a beautiful appearance. They glitter like the fairy grottoes of a Christmas pantomime, and upon the surface of the ore the beautiful pale green of the chlorides shows in the most delicate tracery. In every nook, at every corner, fresh beauties meet the eye tunnels have been driven

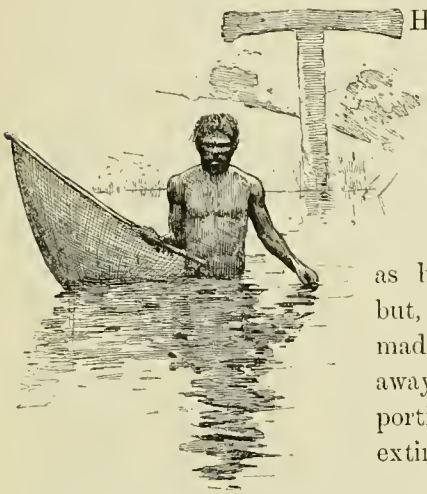
through ore glistening with silver, and crystalline formations of beautiful and fantastic character adorn the rough walls. Ironstone and manganese alternate with kaolin and carbonates, and huge masses of intrusive and valueless rock are flanked with seams of exquisitely beautiful azurite.

Not less interesting than the underground workings are those carried on in the smelting works. High over head rise the clouds from the smoke-stacks; beneath is a network of pipes, from which escape jets of steam; the huge boilers, ever hot and thirsty, suck their supply of water from a reservoir whose surface is hidden beneath a cloud of vapour. The slag or refuse, drawn in ruddy streams from the furnaces, is cast in hot masses on the heap. From fiery fountains pours bullion in streams of the consistency of water, and from these it is ladled into moulds and turned out in slabs and ingots, ready for transhipment to the market. The smelters are the most complete of any in use in the colonies. The secret of saving the whole of the precious metal contained in the slag is in the proper admixture of the three classes of ore—viz., lead, iron, and kaolin. When scientifically blended, silica, iron, and manganese are in due proportion; and the excess of any one of these means the waste of so much silver. Kaolin ore, which contains a small percentage of lead in comparison to silica and alumina, is the most refractory to treat, the two last-named minerals being unfavourable to the smelter. Iron ore is more expensive to deal with than lead, while argentiferous copper ore presents no great obstacle to the production of clear slag. It only remains to add that Australasia can now boast of three mountains of valuable metallic ore: Broken Hill (silver), Mount Morgan (gold), and Mount Bischoff (tin).

SILVERTON CREEK IN FLOOD.

THE ABORIGINES.

The Causes of Extinction—Relations between Settlers and Natives—Tasmanians—Queen Truganini and King Billy—Australian Aborigines—Pitching Camp—Supper—In Council—Pantomimes—The "Gentle Craft"—A Night Fishing Scene—Kangaroo and Emu—Death and Hunting—Burial—Statistics—Point McKay and Poonindie Missions—The End at Hand.



ABORIGINAL FISHING WITH A NET.

THE native tribes (or, to speak correctly, the remnants of the tribes) are as picturesque as much of the scenery with which they are surrounded. A great deal has been written about them, for they excite interest. Much has been done by philanthropists in attempts to mitigate the hardships and suffering which appear to invariably dog the footsteps of the savage as soon as he is brought into contact with more civilised men; but, despite the best-intentioned efforts that have been made, the Australian native is slowly but surely passing away from off the face of the earth. Indeed, in one portion of Australasia—viz., Tasmania—the race is quite extinct.

That this should be so is to some extent to be regretted. But the causes to which the extinction may be ascribed are not all to be debited to the tyranny and vices of the white man. The aborigines themselves are greatly responsible. It is true that the colonists, in occupying the fattest of the land, where water and game abounded, have restricted the native hunting-grounds, and have driven the tribes to districts where life may not be sustained except by extraordinary exertion; and that the love of strong drink, and other vices and diseases of civilisation, have helped materially to reduce the numbers of the blacks. On the other hand, it must be said that they still practise customs such as infanticide, that have been handed down to them from past ages, and others that must be nameless, but which tend to cut short the thread of their lives. Owing to the exposure consequent upon an outdoor life in a climate subject to excessive and sudden changes of temperature, they are afflicted with many diseases of the respiratory organs. An old native is now an uncommon sight, and was hardly more common in the early days of settlement. They regard infirm people as a nuisance; it is difficult to follow a nomadic life if many cripples exist, and so these unfortunates are either left to die in some secluded spot, or are tapped on the head with a waddy. Infants are frequently killed for a similar reason; they are literally encumbrances.

In their treatment of the natives in the past the settlers no doubt in many instances sinned grievously, and the philanthropic efforts now made are but acts of

common justice. Yet it is difficult, in founding a new country, where, surrounded by treacherous and warlike native tribes, the colonist carries his life in his hand, to be always just and considerate. The natives stole sheep and cattle, and murdered white men who had ventured to live at some distance from their fellows. For weeks and months they would wear a mask of friendship. The whites would be lulled to a sense of security, and would lay aside measures of precaution. Then the blow would fall, and the natives, rising in a mass, would deal out "battle, murder, and sudden death" to those who had been willing to be their friends. Houses would be rifled and then burned. The annals of Australian life in those days contain many an account of crimes perpetrated by the blacks on defenceless women and children, the mere reading of which causes the blood to run cold.

At this period even, in dark places on the continent, deeds such as these are done, and are followed by reprisals on the part of the whites that are stern and unrelenting. But the one great crime of the natives is their treachery. This is a hard thing to forget or forgive. To-day the white man will hold out to the black the hand of friendship; the black will grasp it, and as he does so will conclude that the white man is weak and a fool. To-morrow, or the next day, or the day after that, or when most convenient to him, he will steal behind his friend and with one blow dash out his brains.

But enough of horrors; let us consider that side of the native character which presents the most interesting features. Let us view the manners and customs of the aborigines, and wonder, as we still must, "Where did they come from?" We do not attempt to give an answer to this question. It has been suggested that they are one of the lost tribes of Israel; and though this is obviously a mere guess, it is an interesting coincidence that many of their customs and ceremonies are similar to those practised by the Hebrews, as related in the Old Testament.

We have said that the race of Tasmanian natives is extinct, and of these we will first relate the little that is known concerning them. Not often in the known history of the world has a race of people entirely passed away.

In some respects the Tasmanians were different in appearance from the natives of the continent. But, as with the Australians, they were not all alike, and numbers of the members of some tribes could not be distinguished from the Australians. The chief difference was in the hair, which was more woolly. This peculiarity was more noticeable in the men than in the women, probably owing to the fact that the latter kept it closely cut. The men allowed their locks to grow very long, and each lock was separately matted with grease and ochre. Captain Cook, writing of the Tasmanians in 1777, tells us that those whom he first encountered were quite naked, and without ornament of any kind other than the lumps and scars made on their bodies by tattooing. They were of common stature, but rather slenderly proportioned. Though their hair was woolly, they were comely of face, and not particularly thick in the lips and nose. They had good eyes; their teeth, too, were good, but very dirty. This characteristic, by the way, is peculiar: for, as a rule, the Australian native has remarkably fine white teeth. In addition to putting grease and ochre on their hair, the men rubbed it on their bodies. They used a kind

of plumbago as well as ochre, possibly for ornament, though it was said that it also preserved them in some degree from the effects of cold. Judging from the refuse-heaps about their camping-places, their food consisted of opossums, squirrels, kangaroos, and bandicoots. And though no canoes were ever seen, nor trees found that had been barked for the purpose of making boats of any kind, it was evident by the remains that the natives ate both shell and other fish. Possibly they secured these by diving.

When first the Tasmanians came in contact with the whites, they are said to have shown great mildness of manner; they were diffident and friendly in their bearing, and rather afraid of the invaders. No sooner, however, were the convicts let loose than these things changed. Ticket-of-leave men began to steal wives and maidens, and to slaughter the warriors; settlers began to occupy the land; and thereupon the natives naturally evinced strong feelings. They proved that they were capable of even greater ferocity than the whites. In their attacks they showed much energy and perseverance, but their struggles were without avail.

After a time the few remaining men and women were sent to an island in the straits, and there supplied with the necessaries of life; but, cut off from the pleasures and freedom they were born to enjoy, they gradually pined away and died.

Tasmania was sparsely populated. Its area is about 24,000 square miles, and the number of the inhabitants was estimated to be not more than 1,400. Their customs regarding death, burial, marriages, &c., were very much like those of the Australians.

From amidst the number of well-known Tasmanians, there are two who stand out in especially bold relief. These were Truganini, Queen of Tasmania, and King Billy, the last male aboriginal. History records that Truganini was a woman possessed of more than ordinary physical endurance. During half a century, amid heartrending events and changes, she had taken a prominent part in native affairs. The story of her life is full of touching incident; and through the dark warp and woof of her life's history there runs a golden thread of romance. She was the daughter of Mangana, chief of the once-powerful Bruné Island tribe. Mr. Calder has preserved the following statement made by the queen herself:—

"We were camped close to Partridge Island (in D'Entrecasteaux Channel) when I was a little girl, when a vessel came to anchor without our knowledge of it. A boat came on shore, and some of the men attacked our camp. We all ran away; but one of them caught my mother and stabbed her with a knife and killed her. My father grieved much about her death, and used to make a fire at night by himself, when my mother would come to him. I used to go to Birch's Bay. There was a party of men cutting timber for the Government there; the overseer was Mr. Munro. While I was there two young men of my tribe came for me; one of them, named Paraweena, was to have been my husband. Well, two of the sawyers said they would take us in a boat to Bruné Island, which we agreed to. When we got about half-way across the channel they threw my companions overboard, but one of them (the sawyers) held me." The native men, being good swimmers, followed the boat, overtook it, and laid hold of the gunwales. Then one of the sawyers with a hatchet struck off their hands.

The poor fellows at once sank, and the whites carried off the girl. In June, 1830, Truganini, together with her husband, children, and two other native women, gave themselves up to Robinson and MacKay. She was then about eighteen years of age.

Robinson was a man of extraordinary character. He was of humble origin, but of noble mind. Horrified by the continual outrages perpetrated alike by blacks and whites in their reprisals, he felt called upon to act the part of a mediator. He was looked upon as a fanatic and a madman, or, worse still, as an impostor. Unarmed, he went forth on his mission among the natives, and in time the Government consented to assist him by a vote of money. To his trials, hardships, failures, and triumphs we cannot here do justice. But in Truganini he found a firm friend and faithful ally. In one instance she saved him from death. She followed him throughout his wanderings; acquired the dialects of the various wild tribes, so as to be able to converse freely with them; and invariably preceded Robinson when approaching hostile blacks. The Arthur River was the scene of Robinson's great peril and of Truganini's devotion. The story, but that the sequel is different, brings to mind the loyalty of Pocahontas. Robinson, pursued by the blacks, was forced to the edge of the river. The current ran strongly, and he could not swim. Seizing a log of wood he plunged in, hoping to cross; but the stream carried him down, and he would either have been drowned or have again fallen into the hands of the natives. At this juncture Truganini swam after him, and grasping one end of the log, towed it and the man to safety on the opposite bank. She died at the age of sixty-five, and to the last was faithful to the whites. In every sense she was a heroine.

A "WURLEY."

King Billy, though a somewhat remarkable man, cannot be compared for interest

with Truganini. His name was William Lanmney or Lanné. He was not only the last man of the Tasmanian aborigines, but, curiously enough, the last child of the last family brought from the island. He was a jovial fellow in temperament and appearance, and a favourite with all. Making friends with boatmen and whalers, he himself became a whaler, and for years sailed from Hobart Town. In January, 1868, clad in a blue suit and a cap adorned with a gold band, he proudly walked, in company with H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh, on the Regatta Ground. They were a royal pair, and King Billy was blissfully conscious of the fact. But his happy disposition led him into dissipated ways of living, and at the early age of thirty-four he died.

The type of Australian native is well marked. He differs from the Tasmanian less in feature than in hair, form of body, and colour. The Tasmanian is darker, shorter, more stoutly built, and less pleasing in appearance. The Australians differ in appearance in various parts of the continent, but not in any very marked degree. As infants they are light in colour—copper-coloured, in fact—but gradually become darker as they grow older. The head is generally well shaped and placed, the eyes large. The body is well formed, though the limbs are long and thin. The face is not altogether agreeable. The under-jaw is very large, the lips are hanging and heavy. In repose the countenance assumes a sullen expression, but when moved to laughter it is bright and full of life. The Australians have a keen sense of humour, and laugh heartily at any ridiculous event that is presented to them. If they are not poets—and they have not been accused of that—they still have some elements of poetry in them. They dislike labour—using that word in its strictest sense. Their muscles and hands are those of sportsmen. In pursuit of game they can bear a great amount of fatigue, but they cannot carry heavy burdens; and manual labour—such as digging, fencing, clearing ground, &c.—is very distasteful to them.

KING BILLY.

They are nomadic in their habits. It is necessary for them to frequently change their place of abode, but they are careful to keep within the boundaries of their tribal territory. For one tribe to trespass on the hunting-grounds of another would provoke war. They wander from place to place in search of food, going sometimes to the rivers for fish, at another season to the sea, and again at certain times of the year they seek spots where the yam-roots can be got, wherewith to make bread, and where the acacia-gum can be obtained. They re-visit old camps time after time until a death takes place. After such an event the spot is avoided.

When they intend to shift camp, the head man or chief—having consulted with the old men of the tribe—fixes upon a spot some distance off, and the order to march

is given. Small articles are carried, but others of larger size and of much weight are stowed away in hollow trees and other hiding-places. They are poor travellers when moving in a body, and the camps are seldom very far apart.

A little while before sundown they arrive at the spot fixed upon by the chief. He has led the way at a pace consistent with the strength of the children and the heavy burdens of the women. They are the beasts of burden, their lords and masters carrying nothing but their spears and opossum-rugs. The chief, throwing down his rug, sticks his spears in the ground, and at once begins to carry out the duties that devolve upon him. The whole party are in a state of bustle and excitement. The leader chooses a tree suitable to his wants, and begins to cut notches in the bark as high as he can reach from the ground. In the lower ones he places his toes, and raises himself to the desired height. He then cuts a deep ring about the tree, descends to the ground, and cuts a second one. With blows from the back of his axe he next loosens the bark and takes it from the tree in strips. Each head of a family does the same, and with the bark "lean-tos" are made. They are termed *miams, mia-mias,* or *wurleys*—the term varying with the locality of different tribes. Meanwhile the women have busied themselves in gathering sticks, building fires, and getting water. The wurleys are now built and prepared for the night. The natives do not herd together pell-mell. There is a plan for the proper arrangement of the huts, and it is well understood. Order and method are recognised.

If a whole tribe be present, it is divided into groups, consisting of six wurleys each. Each wurley stands a distance of five or six yards from the next, and each group is separated by a space of about twenty yards. Moreover, every family has a separate fire, so placed that it cannot ignite the materials with which the hut is made. Care has to be exercised in this, for, in addition to bark, boughs of trees and grass are used. Sometimes a sudden gust of wind will whirl the fire into the wurley and set it alight, but this is of rare occurrence: the wurley is generally placed with its back to the wind, and is turned if the wind chops round.

The fires being kindled and the wurleys built, supper is prepared. The game killed during the day's march is produced and cooked. If the women and children are very hungry, the flesh is simply cast upon the glowing embers, allowed to remain a few minutes, and then eaten. It is generally in a semi-raw state, but the people do not object to that. Still, they have one most excellent way of cooking fish and fowl—one that many white cooks might imitate with advantage. The fish is enveloped in a sheet of soft and tender paper-bark, tied round with green rushes, and placed upon the coals. Birds are neither plucked nor drawn, but are covered completely over with a coating of clay, and then cooked in a hole dug in the ground and heated with hot stones from the fire. In both instances the juices of the meat are preserved. The feathers of the bird, and the scales of the fish, come away with the covering.

When supper is over the natives give themselves up to amusements, or do light labour of various kinds. The old men engage in serious talk on matters concerning the tribe; the warriors and young men busy themselves in making new weapons, or in repairing those that have become damaged; the women chatter; the lads romp around the wurleys,

or practise dances and other arts; and the girls and young children search amid the decaying trunks of fallen trees for food in the shape of grubs and lizards.

The government of a native camp is not confined solely to one man. The doctor or sorcerer is supreme at certain times; when rumours of war are in the air the most renowned warrior directs affairs; dreamers and seers of visions control events and order the movements of the people until their prophecies are either fulfilled or forgotten. The old men act as councillors, and even the warriors are slow to act without asking their advice. Last, but not least, come the old women, who express their wants, and give advice on every conceivable topic, and with noise and clamour try to influence the leaders of the tribe.

There are no cooking utensils. Both men and women carry bags made of neatly-plaited grass. In those of the men are to be found a few remnants of food, round, smooth stones used in the arts of sorcery, and perhaps (carefully wrapped in bark) portions of the fat of some man they have killed. In their bags the women carry a few roots, food in the shape of squirrels, the leg of a native bear, or part of a kangaroo; also opossum-skins for making rugs, shells wherewith to score them on the inner side, and the tail of an opossum, the sinews of which serve for sewing-thread for the rugs. Another item not uncommonly found in them is the hand of a dead friend, or maybe of the last child that has died in the family; this is all that the poor woman has to remind her of her loss.

Dogs swarm in the camp, and are as much thought of and cared for as the children. As a rule they are mangy brutes. At night they share the warmth of the opossum-rugs that cover their masters. It was at one time supposed that these animals were not native to the country; but their bones have been found many hundreds of feet below the surface of the ground, and it is certain that they, at any rate, date back to pre-historic days, and were living at the time when the great marsupial lions of Australia roamed over the hills and plains.

The Australian natives have many games and amusements with which to while away the time; but that known as the corroboree is most deserving of description. The corroboree is generally termed a dance, but, strictly speaking, it more nearly approaches a dramatic recital. They are very perfect in the performance, and exhibit a skill and dexterity only to be gained by long practice. From the day when an infant is able to stand and walk alone, its education in the movements of the corroboree is begun.

Besides this dance, there is one of a mystic character, supposed to be connected with the religious beliefs of the blacks, but concerning it little is known. Then there is a war dance, held before and after fights; another to celebrate the coming of age, or "making young men," of the boys of a tribe; one performed by women only and indescribable; and a canoe dance. The performers, whether by day or night, are almost naked. They are painted and fully armed, and are decorated with boughs and feathers. The women act as musicians, and an old man, the leader of the orchestra, beats time. In this matter of keeping of time the Australian excels. A hundred feet, hands, or voices will move or shout as one; no body of soldiers, no orchestra of instrumentalists,

no chorus of singers in the civilised world, no matter how highly drilled or trained, could surpass the natives in this one thing.

The following description of an elaborate dance or recital may, perhaps, enable the reader to form some idea of a scene familiar to most people who have been much in the bush of Australia. Imagine a night in the month of August; the moon, nearly at the full and two hours high, moving through a sky cloudless and unfathomable; the air clear and crisp, and just sufficiently cold to make dancing thoroughly enjoyable. The spot chosen by the blacks is a clear space in the forest, from which every stick and stone has been carefully removed. At one end of the glade a number of fires has been lighted, and the glare from them brings out in startling relief, against the gloomy background of the wood, the ghastly white stems of the eucalypti. The fires also illumine the crowd of black faces, with hundreds of glistening eyes, behind them watching and waiting with all the impatience of children at a pantomime, for the performance to begin. There is no curtain to be raised, and the scenery surrounding the stage is as familiar to the audience as the faces of their women and children. But there is an orchestra; it is composed of women and one or two men. The women sit cross-legged on the ground, and hold in front of them opossum-rugs tightly rolled up skin-side outwards. The men have two sticks, cut for the purpose from timber; these, when struck, are capable of emitting sonorous sounds. The lookers-on chatter amongst themselves in low, excited tones; but they cease the instant an old man appears on the far side of the glade. The man walks towards the orchestra with slow and dignified gait. He is the leader, and is proud of his position. Arrived at the fire he gives a signal; the women begin beating their skins and the men their sticks, the while they utter a curious monotonous chant that, sometimes falling to a groan, anon rises to a shrill cry. And now the actors file from the gloom of the forest out into the glade. The moon sheds her clear cold light upon them, and as they approach the fires the ruddy glow catches them and lends a weird and uncanny appearance to the strangely-attired actors, and then the play begins.

HEADS OF ABORIGINES.

The first "act," if we may so term it, shows a herd of cattle feeding on the plain. The men are painted and attired in a manner which gives them the general form of the animal they represent. Some lie down and pretend to chew the cud; their faces are

expressive of ox-like meditation. Others scratch their bodies with their toes or horns, or one man licks another in imitation of the way a cow expresses her fondness for her calf; while others, again, rub heads together, and butt and snort after the manner of bullocks at play.

The second act shows a party of blacks creeping towards the cattle. They come,

ABORIGINES HOP PICKING.

keeping themselves against the wind, so that the herd may not scent them, and in their hands they carry spears and other weapons. Slowly they creep forward, using every precaution to prevent noise, and then, when within striking distance, they hurl their spears. Two of the bullocks are struck down, much to the delight of the audience, who give expression to their admiration by shouts; and, let it be remembered, they are a highly critical audience. They are actors witnessing brother-actors going through a play in which all have acted at one time or another.

The cattle now rush together in a mob, bellowing and frightened; the hunters shout and hurl more spears; and at last the animals break away through their enemies and disappear in the forest. The two dead beasts are now surrounded by the hunters, and the operations of skinning, cutting-up, and carrying away are faithfully acted. But before these things are done with, the third act begins.

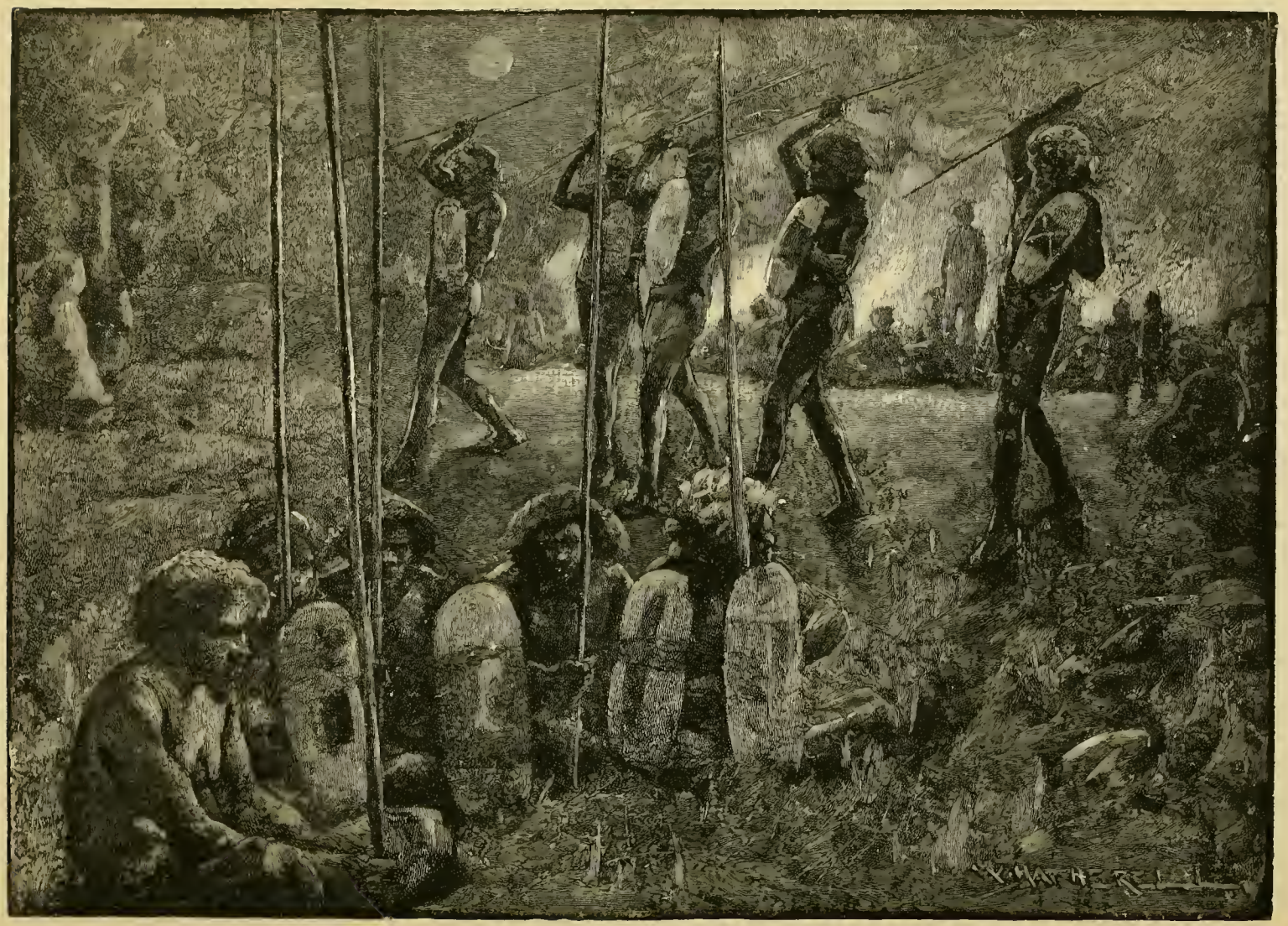
From the forest comes a sound like to the galloping of horses, and a number of natives rush into the open glade. They act the part of white stock-riders, and are got up in capital style. Their hair is whitened to represent hats; the bodies of some are painted blue, others red and white, in lieu of shirts; white legs mean the moleskin trousers in common use among the stockmen; and brown reeds bound round the leg from the ankle to the knee, are symbolical of yellow-leather gaiters. The sound of firing is imitated, some of the cattle-stealers fall, their companions show fight and attack the stockmen, and a sham battle ensues. The excitement of the audience is intense; the clatter of the sticks, the beating of the drums, and the chant wax louder and louder, and the time is much quickened. It is as much as the spectators can do to restrain themselves from running in and joining in the fray. But suddenly the leader gives a signal, the music stops, the fight ceases, and the performers come forward to cast themselves on the ground and receive the compliments and critical remarks of their friends.

The natives are ever on the watch for fresh subjects for their pantomimes. On one occasion four young men, who had been down to one of the cities, undertook to represent a railway-train. It had been the first thing of the sort they had seen, and it had impressed them greatly. On their return to the tribe they had recounted their adventures, and had instructed a certain number of young warriors in the art of representing railway-carriages. The whole thing was capitally done; the puffing of the engine, the rattle of the wheels, banging of doors, and cries of the porters were mimicked to the life. The tallest native played the part of "engine," and the others, stooping one behind the other and stretching out their arms, were the train of carriages and the couplings. It was a most ludicrous sight to see them running up and down the length of the corroboree-ground.

But no description, however minute, can do justice to the scene presented by these corroborees. They must be witnessed to be appreciated. The dances are of frequent occurrence, and are kept up to a very late hour.* The natives, as a race, are not early risers; they love to lie and slumber amongst their rugs and dogs till the sun has made the air comfortably warm. In wet, cold weather there is no more uncomfortable place than a blacks' camp. At these times, if the rain continues for a day or two, food becomes scarce, as the hunters do not care to leave their wurleys until driven out by stern necessity.

In the "gentle craft" the aborigines are adepts, but the rod and line are not commonly used. They practise five modes of catching fish, some of which are exceedingly ingenious. Fishing by hand is a practice common in places where there

* For a description of another corroboree, see p. 156 ff.



A CORROBOREE.

are ana-branches or backwaters to the streams. In times of flood these are filled, and swarm with fish. As the summer advances, the connection with the river is broken, and the water becomes shallow by process of evaporation. The natives are then able to wade in and catch the fish by hand.

In the Port Lincoln district, South Australia, sea-fishing is practised. The natives wade out shoulder-deep in the water; they carry boughs of trees, and having formed a semicircle, they return shoreward, pushing the boughs in front of them through the water. In this way they fairly drive the fish ashore. Nets are used in much the same way as by Europeans. They are constructed of twine made from two fibrous plants—one a bulrush growing in the scrub, and the other the root of a flag that grows in fresh water. This root is first steamed, then partly masticated by the women and handed to the men. They rub it out between the hand and leg, spin it, and twist it into twine. Some native nets have been seen that were really beautiful. One, in particular, was five or six feet deep and about fifty yards in length, and well weighted with stones at one side. It is taken out as far as possible, and then drawn in to shore in the usual way.

These people are also very ingenious in making weirs and dams in either salt or fresh water. On the coast they build them on the flats at low water, and in the streams at a time when the floods can be taken advantage of. On the Bogan, in New South Wales, fishing is left entirely to the women. They effectually drag every hole by pushing in front of them a dam made of the twisted stems of long, tough, dry grass, through which only water can escape. In this way fish are easily secured.

But of all the various methods practised in fishing, that of spearing is the most wonderful. Many kinds of spears are in use, and the natives handle them with astonishing dexterity. One scene related by a traveller is of great interest. The leader of the tribe paddled out to mid-stream and stood erect in his canoe. Nine young men, armed with short spears, went up river along the bank. At a sign from the leader all dived and returned towards him, alternately diving and swimming. They transfixed the fish under water and threw them upon the bank, where they were secured by the women. Besides those caught in this way, many fish were driven to the shallows among the reeds lining the banks, and were speared by men on the watch. The weather was bitterly cold, and at short intervals the men left the water and warmed themselves by standing within a circle of fires lighted by the women.

A night-fishing scene is full of picturesque features. On the Murray River the canoes used by the natives are nothing more than a sheet of bark. This is taken from the tree, and, while green, is forced into a saucer-like shape by means of weights. The edges are laid on a circle of stones, and other stones are placed in the centre to weigh the bark down; it is then allowed to dry, when it retains its shape. These canoes are very primitive, and are very unsafe for anyone to use who is not accustomed to them. The least movement to one side is sufficient to overbalance them. The natives, however, rarely meet with accidents, and, being able to swim like fish, a ducking does not frighten them. At night the fisherman pushes off in his canoe, armed with a long spear, which also serves the purpose of a paddle. He stands erect in the centre of his

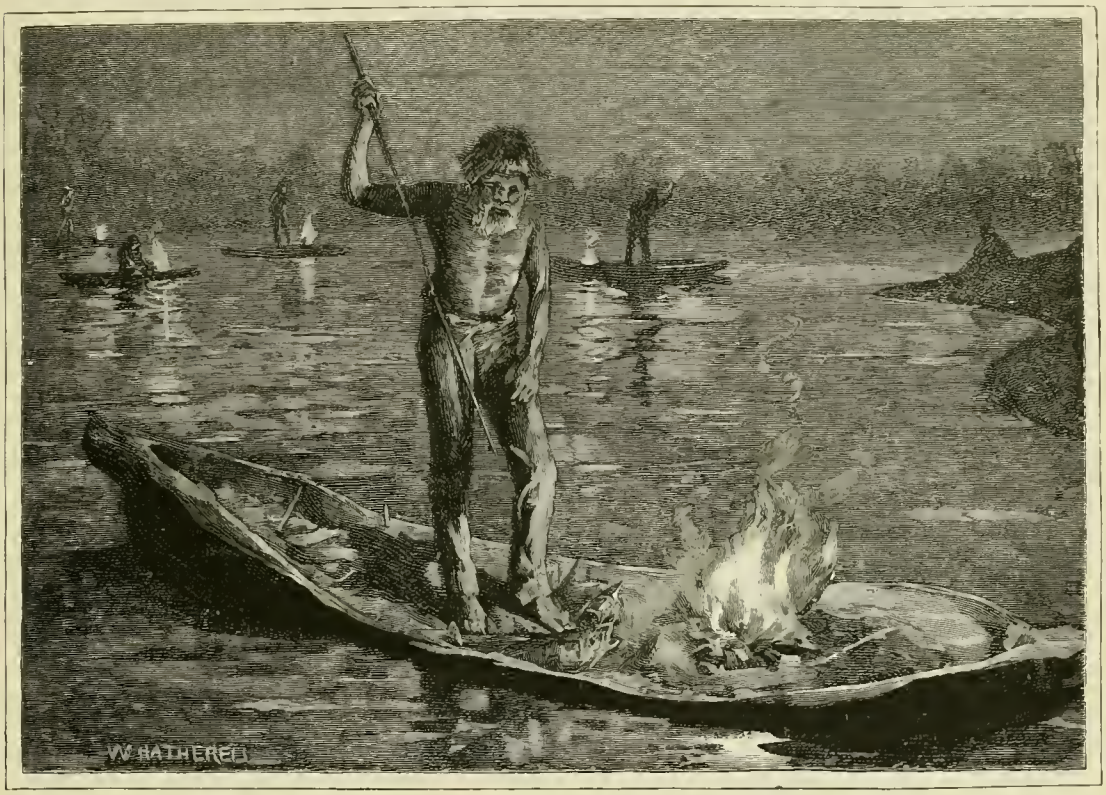
sheet of bark upon a small quantity of earth, which serves as ballast. On a lump of clay placed in the bow burns a fire fed with wood of a peculiar resinous nature. It gives forth a clear bright flame without smoke. The fish, attracted by the light, swim towards it, and are quickly speared by the native. His eye is as keen as that of a hawk, and he knows how to make allowance for the refraction of light in the water. He seldom misses his aim, and in a short time is able to return to his camp with a load of fish. It is a curious sight to look upon the river at night when a number of men are fishing. There is no sound of voices, the surface of the water is reddened with the light from the fires, the canoes drift with the current, and above all tower the dark statuesque forms of the men.

On rocky promontories of the sea-coast it is not uncommon to meet with sights to inspire a sculptor's hand. A native stands upon a rock, his spear poised, waiting for the sight of a fish. He is motionless, and the curling white waves foam about his feet, as though longing to sweep him from his slippery foothold.

In Victoria the use of hooks is not common, though in Gippsland the natives use some made of bone and wood. They were not known to the South Australian blacks until after the arrival of the colonists. On the eastern seaboard hooks and lines are in general use.

In hunting the kangaroo and the emu the natives are as expert as in fishing. When after kangaroos they follow the custom of "driving." The huntsmen make their arrangements before leaving camp, and decide upon the particular piece of country to be tried. Armed with spears, waddies, and boomerangs, and accompanied by their dogs, they set out for the place chosen, and then, separating, gradually form a circle round it, and work in to a common centre. Naturally, unless the party happens to be a large one and the circle very complete, many kangaroos escape and break back. But as the men advance, shouting and banging their weapons together, with the dogs yelping, it is seen that game is plentiful. In every direction kangaroos are racing about at top speed, trying to escape. But as they near the line such a din is raised that they turn back and hop about in an aimless and frightened manner. For a moment a big six-feet kangaroo sits up and looks around for a loophole of escape. At a distance he appears to be sitting on a three-legged stool, his two hind-legs and the base of his tail forming the supports. But the natives are now hurrying forward, and the dogs are in full cry, and quickly overhauling and pulling down the smaller and weaker animals. There is nothing for it but to make a bold dash for liberty. The "old man," at his best pace, goes straight for a spot where his enemies do not seem so closely placed; he nears the line, but now three dogs are in pursuit, and racing to intercept him. One comes up and bites his haunches. This is too much, and is not to be borne quietly. The kangaroo halts suddenly, and with a quick sweep of his fore-arms catches the dog up and presses him to his breast, but not in an embrace of love. The arms that encircle him are as powerful as those of a man, and are tipped with short, sharp, strong claws. In agony the dog puts back his head and howls. But though his companions are now near at hand, they arrive too late. The kangaroo lifts up one hind-foot, also claw-tipped, and with two sharp strokes cuts the dog open

from breast to tail. He is rendered harmless, and, dropping the body, the kangaroo turns about to face the others, now tearing at his back. One stroke of his paw scratches a dog, but he is unable to get either of them in his grip; warned by the fate of their companion, they keep beyond his reach, and worry him from opposite sides. The kangaroo's fate is sealed; he is unable to run, for the moment he attempts to do so the dogs fasten their teeth in his flanks and pull him down. The end comes



ABORIGINES FISHING BY NIGHT

quickly; a blackfellow runs up, and with one tap of his waddy between the ears of the kangaroo lays him lifeless on the ground. But this is not the only one that has been killed. The circle of hunters has greatly decreased in diameter; and dogs, spears, and waddies have brought down many a head of game. A few have escaped; but a sufficient number has been killed to supply the camp with food for two or three days. Until it is exhausted the natives will not again go forth, but will stay in their wurleys and enjoy themselves. Even in the way of hunting they will not do more than is absolutely necessary.

When hunting the emu different tactics have to be adopted. This bird is exceedingly shy, it has keen sight, and its great height gives it the power to see an enemy a long way off. In speed it can outstrip a fleet horse, and is seldom caught unless the chase is kept up for many miles. The dogs of the natives have no chance

of running it down, and it would be a difficult matter to surround one in the way practised in kangaroo-hunting. The blacks have therefore to resort to stratagem. Moving cautiously through the scrub bordering the little grassy plains on which the birds love to roam, the hunter sees three or four emus quietly feeding, unsuspicious of approaching danger. Keeping against the wind, so that any noise he may make shall not disturb them, he crawls along from bush to bush until, haply, he gets within throwing distance, when he hurls his spear. It is seldom that he misses a mark, and the emu, after one or two frantic plunges, falls to the ground. The dogs now rush in, but possibly they are too eager. The bird is not yet dead, and with one kick of its long legs sends them howling and limping away. These birds can give a kick as severe as that from a horse, and it is dangerous to go close to them when in the death-agony.

The blacks have two other ways of emu-stalking—usually practised when the birds are out on open plains far away from scrub or timber. One method is for the hunter to cut down a bushy piece of scrub, and, holding it in front so as to disguise his body, to slowly steal upon them. He must move slowly, or the sight of a walking bush will prove a scare. The other plan, and the most ingenious of all, is for the native to dress himself out as an emu. This he does by keeping and drying the skin, with neck and head complete, of the last bird he killed. The neck is kept in position by a slight stick being inserted in it. The body is sewn up, until only a hole large enough to admit a man's head and shoulders is left. It is then put on, and the feathers in the breast arranged so as to allow the native to see where he is going. When he walks towards a flock of emus he bends his body in a stooping position, and moves with the sedate stride of the bird he so well imitates. The resemblance is exceedingly good, for, like those of the emu, the legs of the native are straight and thin. In this disguise he can get close to this, the shyest of all the members of the feathered tribe.

No description of a race of people would be in any way complete if it did not include the customs observed on the occasions of death and burial. Those practised by the Australians are peculiar to them in many ways, and are of as great interest as their games and amusements. Burial customs vary in different tribes; and though there is a general resemblance, no one tribe has exactly the same usages as another. The natives of the northern districts of Victoria appear to have practised the custom of burning their dead on funeral piles. In other parts of the continent the body is buried beneath a running stream, or is placed in a tree, or upon a framework of wood raised high above the ground; but the practice most in vogue is that of interment. When a native is sick unto death, and his friends perceive that the last great change is about to take place, they begin to make arrangements for burial in proper form. To the civilised mind this appears to be an unpleasant thing for the dying man to witness. But to the native it is not so; it is said that he frequently takes much interest in the proceedings, and is pleased to think that his friends intend paying him every honour.

As the end draws near, the dying man is taken to a distance of five or six yards from his wurley, and is laid upon a rug on the grass His friends assemble and mourn his departure, and at the moment he dies they set up a most mournful cry.

Immediately afterwards, however, men begin to prepare the body for burial. It is an article of their superstitious belief that they must, under any circumstance, avoid contact with the dead. The rug upon which the man died is folded about him, enveloping the head, and is tightly bound round with cords made of rushes or twine. The elbows are placed over the trunk, the hands pressing on the breast, and the knees are drawn upwards until they almost touch the chin. A fresh supply of cords is used to keep the limbs in position, and the body is ready for burial. Much crying and lamentation is indulged in; and after the doctor has performed various religious rites, two men are told off to dig the grave.

A dry spot, but one not too greatly elevated, is chosen. The only implements for digging possessed by the natives are the yam-sticks. These are nothing more than pieces of wood about three feet in length, pointed at one end, and slightly flattened to a breadth of two and a half inches. But with these, and with the use of their hands, blacks can quickly dig a large hole in ordinarily soft ground. The grave is dug three and a half feet long, a little more than two feet broad, and about five feet deep. While this part of the work has been in progress, others of the dead man's friends have cut sheets of bark from the trees, and have trimmed them to fit the grave. A sheet of bark is first laid at the bottom, and a soft bed is formed of young leaves and twigs. The doctor then performs some ceremonies, supposed to enable him to determine the direction where lives the enemy that caused the man to die; for the belief is that all deaths are the result of sorcery and malice.

The body is now carried to the grave. This portion of the ceremony, as performed by most nations, is one of the most solemn and orderly of all, but with the Australians it is not so. Without ceremony, and in fact often without decency, the body is picked up, carried to the grave, and dropped down in a sitting posture. Next an opossum-rug is put over it and carefully wrapped round, and the spaces between the body and the sides of the grave are carefully filled with green leaves. Another piece of bark, similar to that on the bottom, is now trimmed to the exact size, and placed resting upon the body, and within a foot or so of the surface. The men and women come forward, and with tears and howls bid the dead man farewell; the earth is next thrown in and the grave filled up. A mound is then raised, from twelve to fifteen inches high, eighteen feet wide, and about twenty-seven feet in length. A fire is made at the eastern end of the mound, and the natives at once strike their camp and move away. In some cases trees are rudely carved as sepulchral monuments; two are chosen for the purpose about twenty yards apart, the body being buried between them.

It is evident that the fear of touching a dead body is not universal amongst the blacks, for in cases where a mother has lost her baby she will carry the body for days and weeks. When she camps she deposits it in a tree out of reach of the dogs, and when the next day comes she takes it tenderly down and walks on. This, as may be imagined, is a most offensive custom, but none of the other blacks would dream of making a complaint, or of suggesting that the body should be buried. It is not uncommon, if the woman has loved the child very much, for her to carry it for a very long period indeed. In this case the body becomes dry and mummified, and, to lessen the bulk, the woman

will break up the little limbs and pack them in smaller compass. A woman will also cut off and carry with her the hand of her dead husband; it is the only thing the poor creature has wherewith to remember one who, despite the fact that in moments of anger he had often felled her with his waddy, had yet showed her the only kindness and love she had ever known.

TREE WITH NATIVE CARVING.

On the Bogan River the natives form regular cemeteries, and lay them out much in the same way as Europeans. The grounds are ornamented, and curved walks or tracks wind in and out amongst the numerous graves. On the Murrumbidgee and Murray Rivers the graves are covered with small thatched sheds.

Owing to the wandering habits of the natives, it has always been difficult to form anything approaching an accurate idea of their numbers. In 1836, when the province of South Australia was proclaimed, the natives in that colony were estimated to be 12,000; and when Victoria was founded, the natives within its boundaries were supposed to number not less than 15,000. In both colonies the race is dying out, and in 1885 the mission stations in Victoria knew of not more than 594 blacks of all ages and of both sexes.

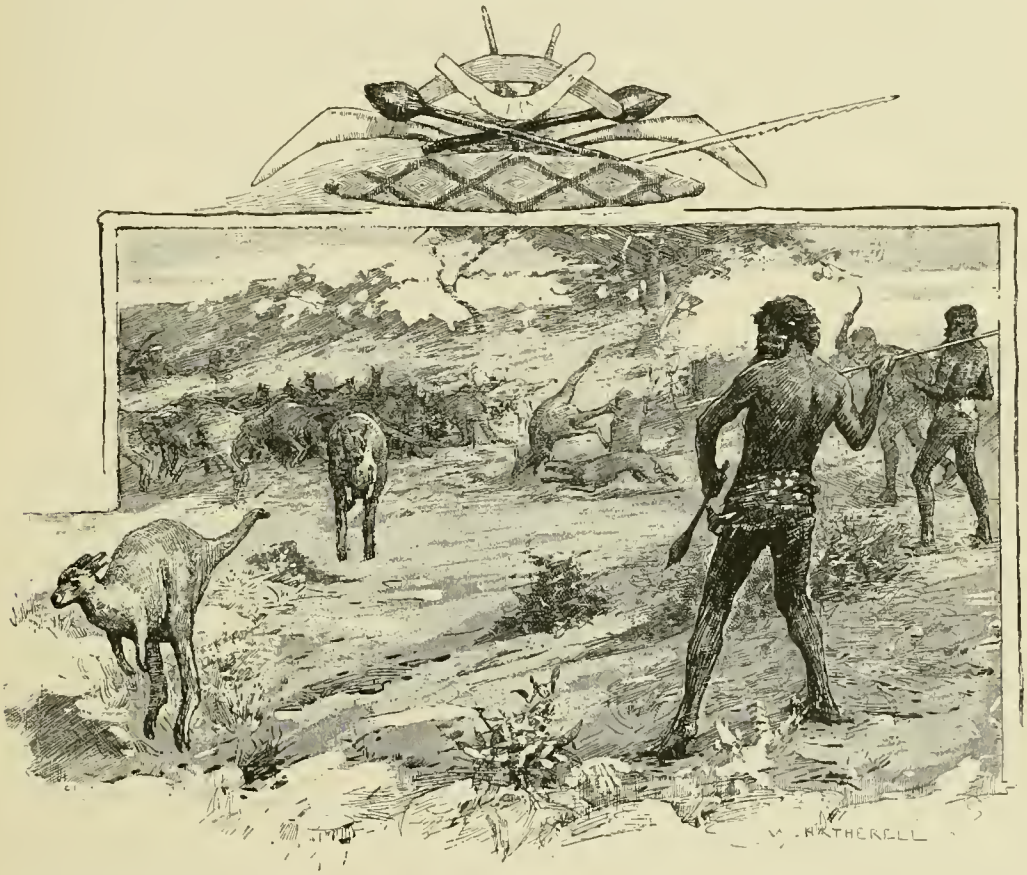
ANOTHER SPECIMEN.

In the opening sentences of this article the philanthropic efforts made by the colonists on behalf of these people have been referred to. In South Australia alone, an annual vote of £5,104 is made by the Government on their behalf, and a special department is provided for the purpose of attending to their welfare and interests. Fifty depôts for distributing food have been established, and five special reserves have been set apart for their occupation. The total area of these reserves equals 670,000 acres.

The Point MacKay Mission Station is the oldest, and is one of the most important. It is situated on the south side of Lake Alexandrina, on a peninsula formed by that lake and Lake Albert and the River Coorong. It was founded in May, 1859, by the Aborigines' Friends Association of Adelaide, at the suggestion of the late Rev. George Taplin, under whose guidance it was formed and has

since flourished. At first there were many difficulties to contend with, but Mr. Taplin was a true missionary, and stood his ground in face of every difficulty from the violence of the blacks and the half-hearted support given by the whites.

Effort was made to utilise the blacks, but at the outset the old men of the tribe were greatly against this idea. They considered it beneath the dignity of a blackfellow to



NATIVES KANGAROO HUNTING.

do aught else but hunt and enjoy himself. More than once those who agreed to work were assaulted with waddies, and driven from their labour. But gradually this opposition died away, and things progressed more smoothly. At first infanticide was much practised, but this was prevented after a while by a ration of food being given to the mother every day until the infant was twelve months old. At first, before the church was built, divine service was held by Mr. Taplin in the sitting-room of his house. The place used to be crowded, and the odour in warm weather was sometimes more than could be comfortably borne. The dresses of the natives were also often of a peculiar character. Some would come in the original opossum-rug; some in a double blanket gathered on a stout string, and hung round the neck cloak-wise; some would have nothing on but a blue shirt, or a woman's skirt or petticoat, the band hooked round the neck and the

arms and hands thrust through holes cut in the sides. One Sunday a warrior appeared and gravely took a seat attired in nothing more than a waistcoat and a high-crowned hat. Mr. Taplin seems to have drawn the line at this, for it is stated in his diary that he persuaded this noble savage to leave the room.

In 1887 the average number of natives attending at the mission station was 120. A large proportion of these can read and write, and many attend the religious services held in the church. On the average thirty-six boys and girls attend the Sunday-school, and two natives act as teachers. No aid, except work, is given to the able-bodied natives, and for this they receive a wage. The area of the station is 4,113 acres.

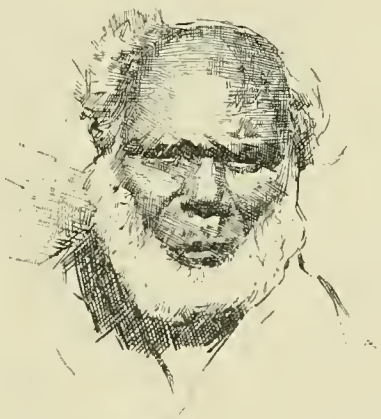
Poonindie Mission Station is situated about ten miles from Port Lincoln, South Australia. On approaching it, the first building that attracts attention is the pretty little church. Close by stands the house occupied by the superintendent, and next come the schoolhouse and one or two other large buildings. The stone cottages in which the blacks live are neat, well-built little places. In a few of them the rafters have been hidden by a ceiling of calico, but all are whitewashed to a degree that is perfectly dazzling on a sunny day. The buildings of the station are placed so as to form three sides of a hollow square, the enclosed ground being left in its natural state, and representing a small green, common to every member of the settlement.

This station was established in the year 1850 on a reserve containing 15,455 acres leased from the Government at a nominal rental on a twenty-one years' lease. The land is vested in three trustees—namely, the Anglican Bishop of Adelaide, Sir Samuel Davenport, and Mr. E. G. Blackmore, who is the acting trustee. The institution has been self-supporting since 1860. The resident aborigines number sixty-six, and comprise eleven married couples, with seventeen children amongst them; there are also seventeen orphans, seven single men, and three single women. A home is offered to all well-conducted natives, and employment of various kinds is afforded, which is paid for according to each man's ability to work. Widows and orphans are supported by the station, and medical attendance is provided. At the day-school the children are instructed in all the usual elements of education.

Wool is the chief article of commerce produced, and at the present time the station owns about nine thousand five hundred sheep. At all times the natives have proved very useful in working amongst sheep. They are good horsemen, good, shearers and workers in the sheds; and when sheep, cattle, or horses go astray their faculty for following tracks is exceedingly valuable. Amusements of various kinds are encouraged. A cricket club flourishes, and the native eleven of Poonindie have frequently conquered the white cricketers of Port Lincoln. Music, dancing, and indoor games have each their place, and are thoroughly enjoyed by old and young. The women and young girls are instructed in household duties, and make good servants. Married couples have each a cottage, and appear to take pride in keeping their homes neat and clean. A few of the houses are adorned with woodcuts taken from illustrated papers and pasted on the walls. The daily routine begins at 6 a.m., when a bell is rung, and the men arise and attend to the horses and milk the cows. At seven o'clock prayers are read, and all the natives are expected to attend. Then comes breakfast, and

after that work goes on until noon, when dinner and rest occupy one hour. Work ceases at six o'clock in summer, and at five in winter. Evening prayers are held, and at 9 p.m. a bell tolls the end of the day. The people meet at the superintendent's house and wish him "Good-night." After that hour they must keep within doors.

As may be supposed, the number of natives residing on the various mission stations is small in comparison with those living in a wild state. Still, some good is done in making an effort to improve the condition of the original inhabitants of Terra Australis. But no efforts can prevent the race dying out. Every year the numbers slowly but surely become less, and before long the Australians, like the Tasmanians, will be an extinct race



GENERAL VIEW OF PORTLAND.

THE WESTERN PORTS OF VICTORIA.

Portland—Edward Henty—The Road to Bridgewater—Belfast—Warrnambool—Tower Hill—Camperdown—Woodford—Panmure—Terang—Bullenmerri and Gnotuk—Colac.

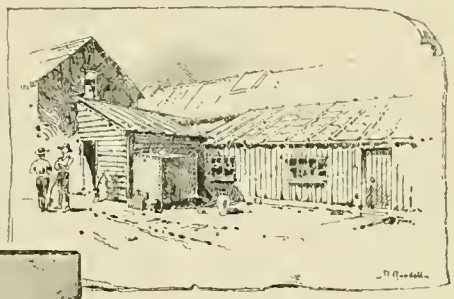
THE western district of Victoria has already formed the subject of an article in this work.* From Hamilton westward the rolling downs and greenswarded uplands are the domain of the sheep. Around Camperdown and Colac the lava-plains, with their crater-lakes, are the pasture-grounds of the prize ox; while the busy little western ports of Warrnambool, Belfast, and Portland are at once the picturesque approach for the tourist and the natural outlets for the produce both of lava-plain and of rolling down.

Portland has been happily christened the "Cradle of Victoria," since here were earliest nurtured those infant flocks of sheep and cattle which grew to dominate the then undiscovered breadth of the colony. Strolling along its sunny esplanade, with the fresh unbroken breeze of the southern ocean blowing in across the blue bay and low, long sandy beach, we find it difficult to realise that we are standing on Australian soil. It is dear mother England that seems to rock the "Cradle," rather than the harder-visaged Victorian foster-nurse. The pitiless jagged needle-rocks and inhospitable sand-dunes that fringe the great bight, stretching hundreds of miles eastward here from Adelaide, give place to the soft and chalky cliff, lapped at its base by wavelets that would sing lullaby to the Cradle, and clad in softest headgear of grassy down and fern-fringed pine-spinney. Can it be that inexorable Fate is relenting even at the last? Does she now once more grant again to our exile feet to wander by Kentish Foreland Downs or sink their steps in Sussex Sands? Have we, like the sailor-boy's sea-birds

* *Vide* Vol. II., p. 228.

reached again "the white dear cliffs of Dover"? The day-dream may be delightful; but over those red-tiled roofs and fishermen's huts by the foreshore there will rise at eve, not the Charles's Wain of the singers of the ages, but the constellation of the Southern Cross. Our heads are turned to other stars.

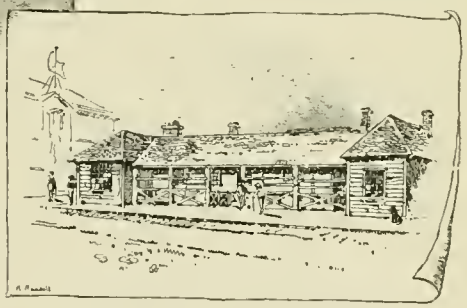
Even those who should know better are tempted to inquire whether the happy resemblance to an old English seaport gained for the Cradle the name of Portland. No; the name is a second generation of heredity. The old Dorsetshire town shed the lustre of its ancient title on the ducal family of Bentinck; and it was from George Bentinck, Duke of Portland, then one of the Secretaries of State, that



FIRST HOUSE BUILT IN VICTORIA.

RICHMOND HOTEL.
The First Built Residence in Portland

Lieutenant James Grant—who first sighted the harbour in 1800 from the deck of H.M.S. *Nelson*—took the name which he gave it. That the principal street, the esplanade on which we stand, should be afterwards dubbed Bentinck Street followed in natural course. Grant had a passion for naming every new landmark he encountered, and his tendency was aristocratic. Thus the last headland he passed before his ship reached our harbour was honoured with the title of the Duke of Northumberland; while that long purple stretch of sheer precipitous cliffs that closes in the western horizon eighteen miles away in the offing had for sponsor the duke's daughter, the Lady Julia Percy. Docked of its titular distinction, the name has now descended to one of the little coasting-steamers that ply between Melbourne and Warrnambool, and the steward will probably tell you that Julia Percy was the name of a sailor's sweetheart.



THE FIRST HOTEL IN VICTORIA.

The island is a favourite sporting rendezvous for Portland holiday-makers, as it abounds in rabbits and wild fowl. It is only accessible on one side, the cliffs in every other direction being some 250 feet high, and running vertical to the water's edge.

But they are full of wondrous and gigantic caves, peopled by countless swarms of seals, which afford not only exciting sport but substantial matter for commercial enterprise.

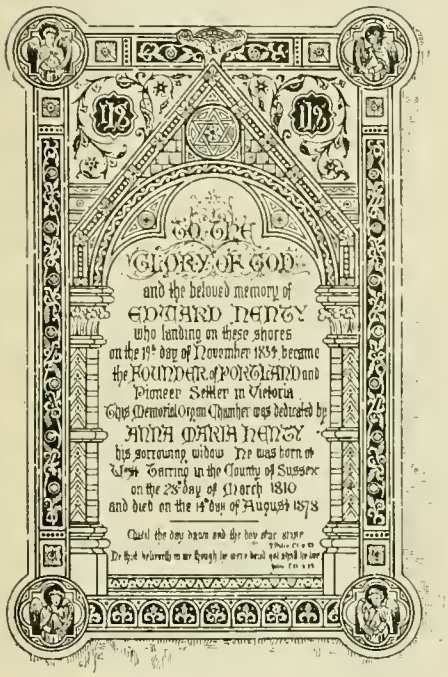
Off the opposite crescent of the half-moon harbour stand the grim St. Lawrence Rocks, inaccessible everywhere save by way of the sky, and peopled only by the fowls of the air—the gannet, the shag, and the gull. But few centuries ago a part of the mainland, it serves now to prevent the further encroachment of the waters by the perpendicular rampart that it opposes to the surging swell of the league-long rollers of the Southern Ocean.

It is not alone the natural features of Portland that give it its English look. When Edward Henty settled here in 1833 he brought with him the traditions, not of a Scotch shepherd, but of a Sussex squire, and no subsequent vicissitudes have eradicated the impress of his personal stamp. That pretty white weatherboard villa, with its grassy lawn and English elms, enjoying even yet their secluded leisure amid the busier brick buildings surrounding them, was the first house built in Victoria. True that, like the Irishman's old gun, it has received at different periods a new stock, lock, and barrel; but if we walk round to the back we shall find the identical roof and windows that were placed in position by Henty's own hands. This original germ of the "Richmond House" is now a kitchen, and the "House" itself is Portland's most interesting "Hotel." But the two little square glass windows are the same that astonished the explorer Major Mitchell in 1836, and from which the inmates pointed their muskets and held the historical parley with him whom they mistook for the chief of the bushrangers.*

Everywhere traces and traditions are to be found of the whaling occupation which formed the original pursuit of the first settler. Thus that bold bluff headland standing out to sea in the extreme vista of Bentinck Street still goes by the name of the "Whaler's Point." On its heights was the look-out station from which the whaler's sentinel would signal the first spouting of a fresh "school;" and not far back on the shore we come upon the ruins—the sheds and the vat-frames—of the "Whalers' Station." The other end of Bentinck Street marks the spot where the primal landing was made, and where the picturesque piles of the old "Henty Jetty" still run out across the sands and furnish a fragile and even dangerous home for the modern fishermen. The big steamers have driven away the whales, and the old jetty has been long ago supplanted by the "Railway Pier," where the vessels can find more ample accommodation. The silt from the little stream at the southern end of the town, under the lighthouse cliff, is being churned by the backwash of the bay into sand-dunes, that would soon make the little harbour unnavigable; and the aid of the great maritime engineer Sir John Coode has been invoked to construct a breakwater which will afford shelter to the largest vessels, and will render the little town even more in accord with its English namesake. Indeed, if the success and magnitude of the new "Portland Breakwater" be at all commensurate with the pride its inhabitants take in it, the Dorsetshire prototype will sink by comparison into insignificance. The English insular prejudice may regard it as contrary to natural order that theirs should have been built by convict-labour, while the Australian structure is the work of free men.

* *Vide* Vol. II., p. 240.

Picturesque ruins are not frequent in a young country like Australia; but they have their equivalent in the dilapidated relics of what are called "the early days." Portland boasts, perhaps, more of these than even the historic "goldfields" of Sandhurst and Ballarat. A remarkable example is to be seen just opposite the old Henty Jetty, the weatherboard shingle-roofed skeleton of the first and oldest hotel in the colony. And here it must be premised that, from the palatial structures of the Melbourne "Menzies" and "Scott's," down to the flimsiest bush-road shanty of the "Swagman's Rest," every drinking-house in Australia rejoices in the appellation of an "hotel." True, the keepers are known as "publicans," but the plebeian style of "public-house," and the good old-fashioned substantial English name of "inn," have no employment. The flesh which in early days clothed the "Old Hotel's" now decrepit skeleton was quick and lively indeed, and abnormally vigorous was the circulation of its blood. The squatters of the period rode many miles for a "hundred up" under the glazed lantern-roof of its famous billiard-room; and whole regiments of horses whiled away the blazing noon "tied up" to the posts of its trellised and shady verandah, while the stolid steers, in teams by the dozen, dozed placidly on the grass in front, until their drivers had completed their regulation half-score "long-sleevers" of "she-oak." Here, too came the dissipated shearer and the devil-may-care boundary-rider for the essentially Australian amusement of "knocking down their cheques"—shadows of a chequered past now vanishing fast before the light of an advancing civilisation.


GLORY OF GOD
and the beloved memory of
EDWARD HENTY
who landing on these shores
on the 9th day of November 1834 became
the FOUNDER of PORTLAND and
Pioneer Settler in Victoria
This Memorial Organ Chamber was dedicated by
ANNA MARIA HENTY
his sorrowing widow He was born at
West Tarring in the County of Sussex
on the 28th day of March 1810
and died on the 14th day of August 1874

HENTY MEMORIAL BRASS, PORTLAND.

If Portland Bay recalls the memories of Kentish cliffs, a drive along the westward coast past the lighthouse will carry the fancy back to the wild grandeur of the red rocks of North Devon. Seventeen miles away stands the terrible ocean-buttress of Cape Bridgewater, and the only easy approach is by the aid of a pair of stout buggy-ponies. The road lies past the Botanic Gardens, an epithet which is bestowed with little or no justification on the pleasure-reserve of nearly every township in Australia. Still, those of Portland may lay some little claim to the dignity; their pines are the oldest in the colony, and their olives might adorn the brook of Kedron. But brooks are infrequent in this portion of Greater Britain, and even the limpid lagoons that fringe the meres are debased by the unpoetic title of "swamps." There is a very picturesque example of one at the back of these gardens, which the inhabitants, instead of draining, have more sensibly dammed, and have thereby converted into a silver sheet of lake-like placid water, whose overflow meanders a reed-bordered rivulet round the foot of the

western lighthouse cliff, and under the venerable old bridge of wooden piles—one of the most rustic features of the district—out into the sandy foreshore now being reclaimed by Sir John Coode. Over this bridge we go, and are soon at the top of the lofty bosky down on which the old lighthouse stands.

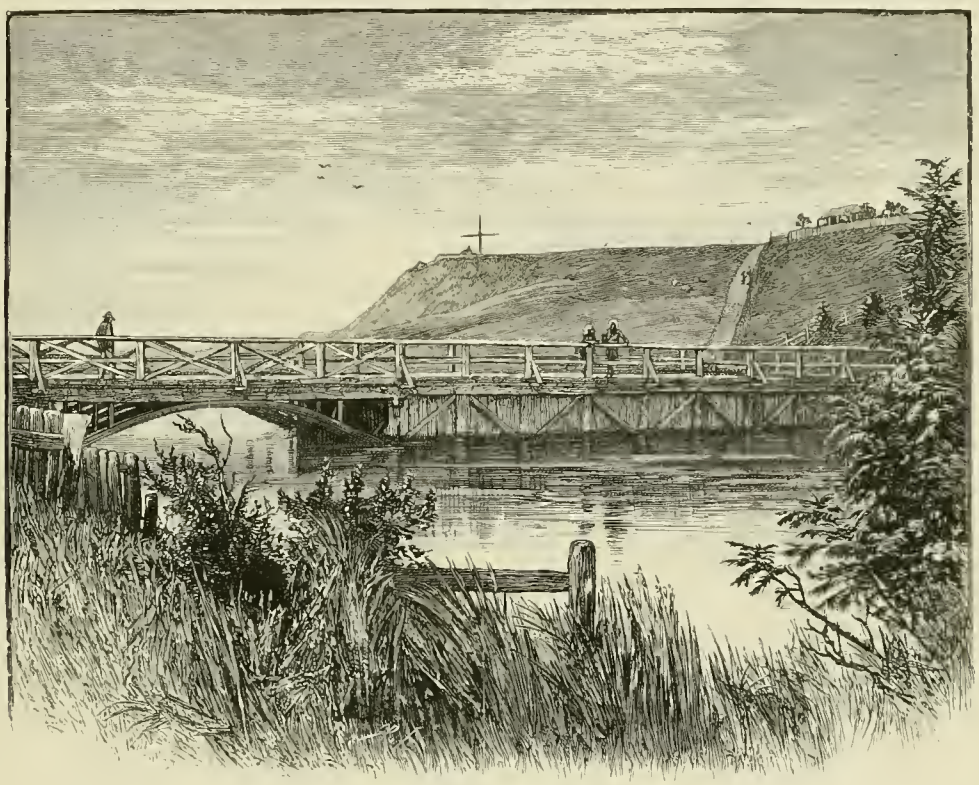
Quickly the undulation subsides in a long stretch of sandy plateau, brilliant in colour as a Scotch deer-forest, by reason of the thicket of tall heaths and ericas—purple, scarlet, white, and orange—in which it is densely clad. Rare indeed are the specimens which may be gathered here, and the artist's eye may surfeit itself with colour before he reaches a scene more racy of the soil—a forest of that remarkable palm-like vegetation, the native grass-tree. Seven or eight miles will set him on the grim height of Cape Nelson, and he will be well repaid by inspecting the admirable lighthouse. This

BENTINCK STREET, PORTLAND.

may be called the "Lizard" of the returning Australian, the first light that he sights before the Eddystone of the Otway; and a glance at the raging surf on the red rocks below will enable the visitor to realise the value of such a warning beacon against the terrors of this rugged coast.

We must travel inland now to regain the road to Bridgewater, which is some fifteen miles distant by the windings of the circuitous coast-line. Like so many other interesting bits of coast-scenery, its beauties are revealed with abrupt suddenness. Dropping over the crest of the hill, we find ourselves in a valley of verdure. The bare severity of Cape Nelson gives place to a hamlet of stone homesteads, comfortable gabled barns, and well-tilled rich farm-lands bordered with shady copses of nut-thickets and briar-hedges. It is well to snatch a short restful enjoyment of this pleasant pastoral peace before descending the dangerous ravine to the awesome titanic roar of the ocean fifty fathoms below. We climb along a narrow ledge of the precipice, and down

a winding and difficult pathway, to one of those remarkable subterlapian tunnels which in two or three similar formations in Australia—and notably in the Port Arthur convict district of Tasmania—have acquired the vigorous epithet of the "Devil's Blow-hole." Millions of waves through thousands of years have honeycombed the apparently adamant pillars of basalt and walls of lime and sandstone opposed to them. Most frequently the fury of the waves has been appeased when the weird cave, with sea for floor and stalactite fretwork for roof, has been completed. There are some such caves here whose



THE OLD BRIDGE, PORTLAND.

tartarean recesses the boldest dare not explore. But in other cases the straitness of the tunnel has served by its very difficulty of access the more to "trouble the waters," whose rage has only found vent when it has burst upwards and inwards through a funnel-shaped shaft at the inland extremity. And it is in the vortex of these inverted maëlstroms that we may realise the most vividly the hitherto unconceived might of hydraulic pressure. Bursting, crushing, roaring, and surging through its stone-bound narrow cleft in the rock, the furious foaming billow of the open and hitherto unrestrained Antarctic Ocean spouts its cyclopean column in boiling turmoil upwards through the vent, and sinks again with as sudden a rush, only to gather greater strength for its next onset. It has opened its windows to heaven, and the affrighted mortal who

can dare for only a moment to glance over the brink of their terrible abysm is appalled by the conclusion that the fountains of the great deep have been broken up.

But we must retrace our road to "our young sea-village" at Portland, where beauty has not yet learned to dwindle into "roofs of slated hideousness." Yet this sorrowful process cannot long be deferred, for the pretty little Sussex-like harbour is annually receiving its larger contingents of autumn tourists, and the necessity of accommodating them will soon develop the Cradle into the Scarborough of Victoria.

Stepping early in the morning on board the small coasting-steamer *Dawn*, lying at the jetty homeward-bound for Melbourne, we find ourselves, after five or six hours' run, at the growing little agricultural port of Belfast. Griffiths' Island forms a breakwater for the entrance to the broad River Moyne, at whose mouth the town stands; and the reach of calm water separating the western and eastern halves of the town is freely utilised by the rowing and sailing boats that constitute the chief amusement of the population. The town itself possesses little interest; but the architectural enthusiast may well be delighted with its elegant "Early English" Episcopalian church, where a mute, inglorious Grinling Gibbons, in the person of a working mason, has expressed his spirit of sacrifice and adoration in multitudinous beautiful carvings of chapiters and mouldings and gargoyles.

Belfast has, however, one meritorious natural show-ground with the unpretentious name of "The Crags." These are a cluster of cliffs and needle-rocks, six or seven miles away westward, on the shore opposite the Lady Julia Percy Island. At low tide their walls enclose uncounted pools of forsaken sea-water, where the lithe and lively barracoota and the agile crayfish-lobster may be captured by hand. Let the wader beware, however, while he heedlessly crushes with his naked feet the myriad coloured flowers in the beds of sea-anemones that he be not enmeshed in the inextricable toils of the deadly octopus, which at certain seasons abounds hereabouts.

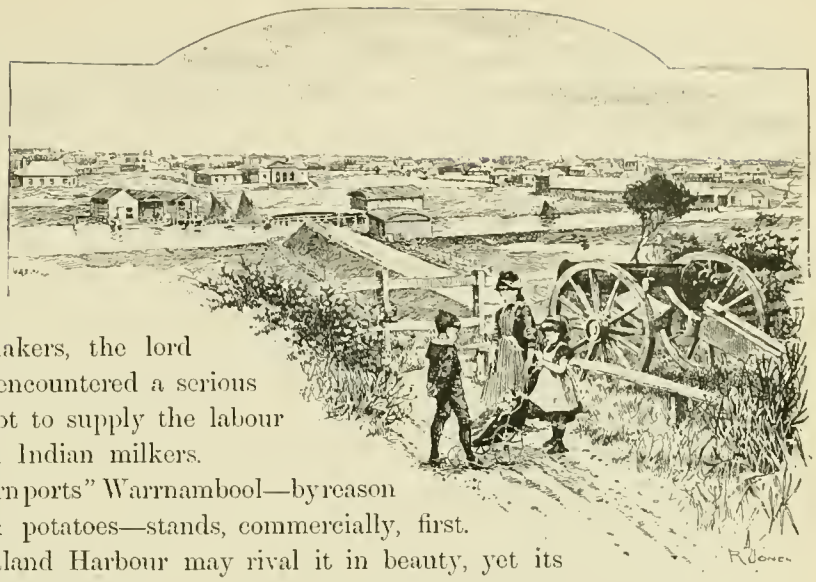
Both Belfast and Warrnambool are strongly Hibernian. Their localities, their magnates, and their peasantry nearly all delight in the patronymics of the Emerald Isle, and, to complete the national characteristics, the pig and the potato reign supreme. The tourist's illusion that he has wandered into an antipodean Erin is only dispelled by the most un-Irish condition that wealth is everywhere and every man his own landlord.

The Warrnambool saleyards on a market-day are a replica of the picture already drawn of Hamilton,* with the variation that the foreground figures of the grass-eating oxen and sheep are displaced to make room for the omnivorous pig. Of the importance of the Warrnambool potato trade some idea may be gathered from the rough statistics that of the 28,000 surrounding acres under cultivation, 6,000 are potato-crops and 13,000 English grasses. The latter afford pasture to "endless herds of kine," who supply the milk for the third staple industry of Warrnambool—the manufacture of its famous cheese.

Where all are landowners, labour is naturally scarce. The chronic "unemployed" of Melbourne and Sydney owe their unemployment chiefly to their preference for

* *Vide* Vol. II., pp. 243, 244.

loafing in those big cities instead of working in the country townships or on the agricultural holdings; those who should be milkmaids unwisely prefer to be machine-girls; and the prince of cheesemakers, the lord of Tooram, very lately encountered a serious caste riot in his attempt to supply the labour deficiency by imported Indian milkers.



BELFAST.

Of the three "western ports" Warrnambool—by reason of its cheese, pigs, and potatoes—stands, commercially, first. And even though Portland Harbour may rival it in beauty, yet its approach by sea calls for admiration. From the long level stretch of silver sand on the foreshore rises a bank of white chalky cliffs surmounted by grassy bluffs, far greener than those which crown the Sussex coast. A nearer approach reveals to the west a dangerous line of reef, over which the surf breaks in perpetual foam; and the reef is repeated eastward on the opposite side, where the broad River Hopkins debouches into Lady Bay. But even these natural breakwaters do not effectively curb the angry swell of the long Antarctic rollers; and the two coasting-steamers, the *Nelson* and *Julia Percy*, though of six or seven hundred tons burthen, dare not approach the present jetty, but land all passengers and cargo by lighters or small boats. As at Portland, the skill of Sir John Coode has here been called into play, and he has designed a noble breakwater.

The most picturesque feature of the district is the river; and no more delightful trip can be made than a row up its broad stream. The angler and the artist will find here all the elements of happiness. In its waters are abundant bream, perch, trout, mullet, and native "salmon," with a sprinkling of the acclimatised Californian king of fish. Along its banks are craggy cliffs, green bluffs, and cool caves, across whose portals depend the weeping willow, side by side with the supple osier, the golden wattle, the sassafras, and the gum. The whispering sedge and the waving reed make fairy music in its shallows; while still, deep, and silent pools are roused from their dreamy sleep to babble in brooklets over the pebbly eyots at their marge. A bend in the stream discloses two sacred islets, whose fern-veiled sanctity is invaded now only by the waterfowl and the platypus. They are the "Islands of the Dead," the inviolate shrines of the buried wife and children of one of the early settlers; the barge of Elaine could scarcely have borne her to a more restful haven.

For him who prefers the sea-shore to the river-bank, the sand-drifted stretch of Shelly Beach will furnish a maritime picture. Deposits of millions of the discarded habitations of molluscs have given it its name, and a seaward-stretching plateau of tide-

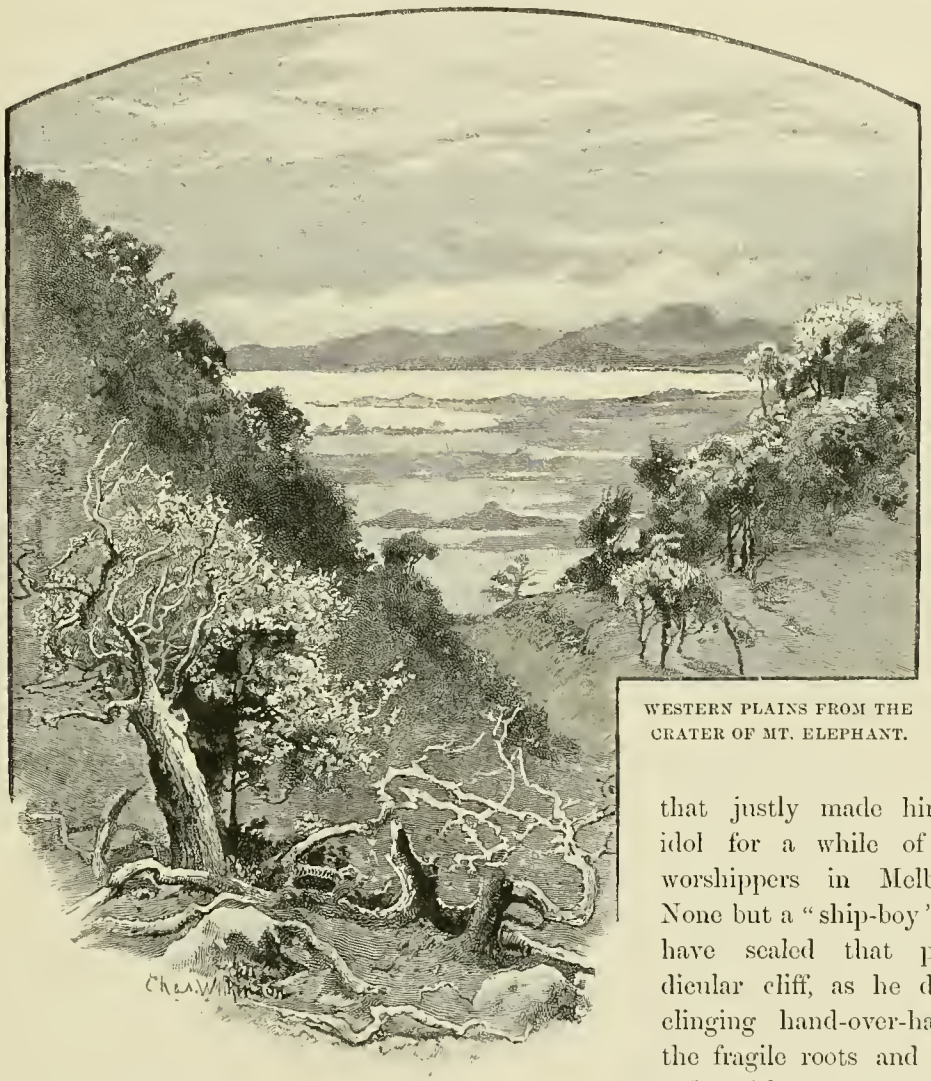
washed reef lends it a loftier dignity. But let the tourist be eclectic, and for maritime recollection content himself with the remembrance of pastoral gentleness in combination with littoral grandeur at Cape Bridgewater. Warrnambool's beauties lie inland rather than towards the ocean, and we must visit the last of them at the crater-fosse of Tower Hill Lake and the old volcano of Koroit.

A strange conformation is this Tower Hill, with its circumambient fosse or moat; but the latter is partly artificial. The circular rim of decomposed scoriæ—precipitated thus near to the central crater in the latest stage of its last eruption, when diminished force no longer threw the ashes or lava so far afield—has acted both as dam and watershed for the rains that fall on its own bank and on the volcano's sides. Thus there gradually grew a reedy fen round what is now the central island, or rather three central island-cones, for the dead volcano was triple-headed. Set the bottom of a truncated beer-bottle on the grass, and leave a little of its liquor within; the central hollow cone will aptly represent Tower Hill, while the dregs of the beer will be the lake. The locality is a favourite picnic-ground, so the fragments that remain afford scope for the experiment. It matters not that the level of the beer be above that of the grass; this only makes the resemblance closer, for the reedy fen did not become a lake until an ingenious early Irish settler dammed the breach in the circular rampart to make himself an artificial reservoir. The overflow now trickles away to join the Hopkins, thirteen miles distant, at Warrnambool. The circular lake is six miles in circumference, and three or four miles away is the quiet little village of Koroit, nestling peacefully in the shade of its woods and hedges on the lower slopes of the volcano, from which it derives its aboriginal name, whose English equivalent is "fire." This same "fire" was the precursor and first cause of all the wealth of the district; for it is to the generous depth of rich, chocolate volcanic soil that the potato-grounds owe their inexhaustible fertility.

The road back to Warrnambool lies through the village of Woodford, the one place perhaps in all Australia that accurately reproduces the character of its English namesake. The Merri Creek crossing plays here the part of the old Woodford Bridge over the willowy, roach-thronged Roding of the Essex hamlet. The stern Australian rectangularity of road-surveys unbends before the hawthorn-bordered country lanes winding, creeping and twining, up hill and down dale, through dells of lilac and laburnum and native violets and sweet-briar. But the absence of the primrose and the bluebell hyacinth, with the chatter of the native magpie instead of the cawing of the rooks in the ancestral elms of the Essex country squiredoms, remind us that the next winding of the road will land us, not at the rustic "George" or Snaresbrook "Eagle," but in the clean, white, prim streets that lead to the Warrnambool Town Hall. Still Woodford is Essex-like in one feature more—it is a noted farming district, not of tenant-tillers, but of freehold yeomanry.

We might return by a breezy coasting-voyage of twenty-four hours to the Queen's Wharf at Melbourne for the moderate charge of 12s. 6d. We should double, after eight hours' steam, the Cape Otway lighthouse, and should previously skirt the most dangerous coast-line in Victoria, whose history is a record of continual disasters. Twenty-four miles west of the Otway, near the isolated anchorage of Port Campbell,

stand the two arched columns, 200 feet above the tide-level, marking the deadly reef where the ill-fated *Loch Ard* struck and sank a total wreck. Into the little sandy cove close by the sailor-boy Tom Pearce, alone of all her crew, was washed; and it was his daring gallantry in swimming back to save one of the women among the passengers



WESTERN PLAINS FROM THE CRATER OF MT. ELEPHANT.

that justly made him the idol for a while of hero-worshippers in Melbourne. None but a "ship-boy" could have scaled that perpendicular cliff, as he did, by clinging hand-over-hand to the fragile roots and scanty tufts of herbage on its face. But the memories of such disasters strip the sea-passage of its allurements. We prefer rather to utilise the splendid coach-roads of the district, and to take on our way the prize-ox pastures of Camperdown and Colac, with the volcanic plain of the crater-lakes.

The way to Camperdown will lie past Woodford and through Panmure. The distance covers forty-five miles of incomparable metalled coach-road. Stone throughout all the western district may be had for the blasting and picking up. Horses are cheap, good grass is everywhere, and young yeomen are muscular, healthy, sportive, and

abundant. Thus all things favour the pastime of Jehu except the patrol of the police-trooper, whose mission is to take note of whosoever driveth furiously. If, however, there be a desire to taste the dangerous excitement of the old-fashioned colonial coach-road, it may be gratified further south on the outskirts of the Otway Forest, where the undulations are carried up to the heaven, and down again to the deep, so that the driver's buggy reels to and fro, and staggers like a drunken man. He is a skilful pilot who steers his vehicle unshattered through the multitudinous reefs of ungrubbed gum-stumps, or keeps the deck untottering over the liver-rending passages of "corduroy"—a graphic epithet bestowed on the trunks of saplings laid transverse, side by side, for hundreds of yards across any swampy fen, as an effective protection against "getting bogged" deep down in the gullies. The scheme is effective; but the jolting thereof pierceth almost to the dividing asunder of the joints and marrow.

The road through such country will be perhaps intercepted at times by the arms of some dead giant, a fallen gum-tree across the track; or in the balmy evening we may pull up at a tramp's halting-place, a nocturnal settlement known as a "swagman's camp"; or anon our buggy and horses may find temporary stabling in an old deserted saw-mill, left still standing in its little patch of forest-clearing. We might contentedly camp here for the night, and avoid the terror of being lost in the woods, or, as the Australian phrases it, "getting bushed."

But the Panmure road has no such terrors, and the easy smoothness of the drive prepares us for the sedate calm of the settlement. The centre of a grazing and dairy industry, it is well wooded in all its outskirts, though the sawmill-splitters are rapidly clearing new pastures.

At Terang we are only fourteen miles from Camperdown. The entire character of the scenery has changed; the road is sandy and bordered with bracken, with here and there a giant tree by the wayside. The population varies correspondingly. The yeomanry of small freeholders disappears before the broad-acred lord of boundless pastoral territories. Abel is as yet unmolested of Cain. The pretty lake of Terang gives the village its name. To the north-east stands the old volcano of Noorat, and as we near the higher ground of Camperdown, dead craters and peaks rise on every hand.

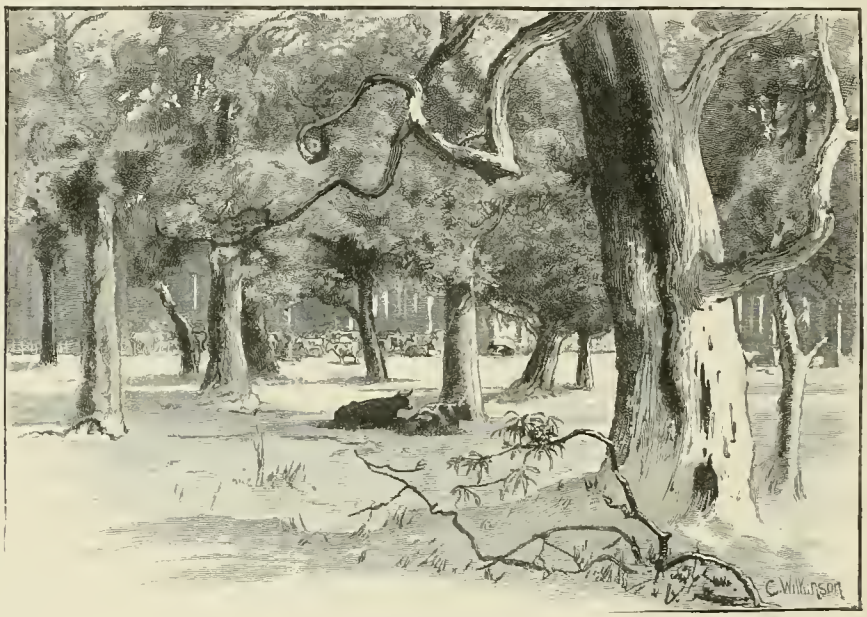
Camperdown is hardly an industrial or pastoral centre; rather is it a junction where the projected Geelong and Warrnambool Railway terminates, and from which splendid coach-roads diverge through the district. But it is annually the scene of an important agricultural and pastoral show, and the district around was the field of some of the earliest grazing settlements. Nowadays there is much cutting up for small market-gardening operations, and the resultant fields pleasantly embellish the landscape. Thus it is replete with all natural beauty, and the artist may find in its surroundings materials for weeks of novel pleasure. The artificial beauty of its "Royal Park" most delights its inhabitants, and on the lawn there stands a very fine statue of the poet Burns. The Irish rule the western ports: but the Scot is again omnipotent and omnipresent in the district of Camperdown and Colac. In 1839 the Manifolds started from Geelong to carry empire westward; now their "run" covers over forty thousand acres, chiefly lava-fenced, for there are few trees to ring except the shady blackwood.

The cheerful elm-avenued town lies at the foot of Mount Leura, and a climb up the slope of this extinct volcano will give a typical idea of the formation of the whole lake-country of the district, for we are now in the region of the extinct volcanoes and crater-lakes. The wall of its crater is 600 feet above the surrounding plain, and at an elevation above the sea of 1,000 feet. The cup-lip is almost perfect in its circular contour, and the enclosed depression of the crater is 300 feet deep. As at Tower Hill, and at nearly all these crater-lakes, there is a central cone rising from the depression, the last effort of the up-boiling lava before finally settling down to inactivity. But Leura's top has no intervening moat-like lake such as we saw at Tower Hill. Between twenty and thirty dead cones may be counted from the elevation of its summit, stretching far away to the huge bulk of Mount Elephant to the north-east; and so clear and transparent is the Australian air that the Ballarat Hill of Warrenheip, seventy miles away, is distinctly visible. Full advantage has been taken of the fertility of its slopes; the chocolate arable, the road-metal quarries, the friable black cinder-beds, and the ash-pans of natural manure serve the double purpose of agricultural advantage and artistic embellishment of outline and colour.

A couple of miles away are the twin crater-lakes of Bullenmerri and Gnotuk, the most curious examples of their type. Both are circular and very salt; their waters are divided by an isthmus extending half a mile, and constituted by tangential union of their crater-lips. Two features of this isthmus surprise local wonderers. It overlays a clay bed of marine shell-fossils, and from it trickles a continuous spring of clear fresh water. But the wonder of a fresh-water spring between a pair of salt reservoirs disappears by very simple explanation. The craters have no outlet; the earthy matters held in solution by their incoming trickling streams are precipitated under the constant evaporation of a hot summer; the vapour carries off the pure water, and the precipitate, whose chief basis is salt, is left behind to communicate its flavour to the remaining pool. A knowledge of this familiar phenomenon has enabled some of the volcanic lakes to be cured of their brackishness. In the Lake of Colac an artificial outlet was made. Circulation was thus induced, and the precipitate followed with the outflow. It is now a fine expanse of limpid fresh water. On the Bullenmerri-Gnotuk isthmus the fresh-water spring is simply the upward flow of those underground percolations whose further downward progress has been arrested by the clay stratum on which the fossil shells are found. The gigantic power of these volcanoes in their age of activity may be estimated by the extent of the lovely circular lakes now occupying their dead craters. Bullenmerri is four miles round, and Gnotuk over five; their depths are respectively 250 and 150 feet. Further south the charmingly-wooded crater-lake of Elingamite, in the Heytesbury Forest, is over six miles in circumference. Their surface is the home of the black swan and every variety of waterfowl: the forests creep from crater-lip to marge, and in some of them the gradual rising of their level is indicated by the trunks of tall gum-trees, seeded years before, standing now breast-high in their waters.

The drive from Camperdown to Colac lies through the remarkable lava-field of weather-worn boulders known by the appropriate name of the "Stony Rises." Years

ago the succulent grasses and little water-holes lying in the shallows of this rock-strewn billowy upheaval were finest of grazing-grounds for the early pioneers' sheep. The sheep displaced the aboriginal burrowing wombat. The only nuisance then were the blacks, who found that kangaroo-catching was too laborious a source of food when compared with the much easier and more novel sport of breaking a sheep's leg to stop his locomotion, and leaving him secreted among the rocks for future dinner-parties. But in progress of time a rank growth of bracken removed the possibility of this native acquirement of roast mutton, and the sheep was superseded by the squatter's direst curse, the manifold-multiplying rabbit. The Stony Rocks are an impenetrable refuge for



AT CAMPERDOWN.

the conies. Neither dog nor ferret, nor gun nor trapper, can exterminate them in this fastness, nor can dynamite dismantle the fortress. The rabbit is lord and master, and from his stronghold he leads out his myriad armies to devastate the outlying pastures. The only resource is a blockade, and it is proposed thus to isolate him by a frontier line, twelve miles by ten, of wire-fencing enclosing the whole district of the Stony Rises, so as to confine the area of his predatory operations.

Future pastoral generations may perhaps take comfort from the geologists' dictum that within the next half-million years these gigantic boulders, now from ten to sixty feet high, will have suffered metamorphosis into pulverised volcanic fertility. The silent agent is doing its daily work, and it is very lovely in operation. Myriads of little velvety lichens mantle the shoulders of every crag, and their insidious root-processes are continuously detaching the outer scales: while new lichens creep over the resultant bare patch to repeat the desquamation. It must be acknowledgd that such pulverising

is a tedious process, and the period of its conclusion may be estimated by the Buddhist conception of eternity—the time required to obliterate a mountain by flapping it with a silk handkerchief. Still, in geology a thousand years are but as a watch in the night. The lichens serve another purpose; they render the Stony Rises as pleasurable a paradise for the artist as for the rabbit. The pretty pools, with emerald grass-patches on their islets, and mossy marges overhung by thickets of branchy brown bracken, reflect in their sky-blue depths the confining walls of the grey granite and lava ridges, from among whose clefts spring the silver stems of the sapling gums, toning down excess or light with feathery overshadowing foliage.

A climb to the top of the loftier rises will reveal in the four-miles' distance the long level stretch of that Dead Sea of Victoria — the salt and shallow Lake Corangamite; and beyond it lies our last destination, the prize-cattle ground of Colac.

The town itself is of no importance, but the region is virtually the empire of the Robertson family, rulers here in successive generations since 1836. Mr. William Robertson is the present owner of "the big house" known as "The Hill." An Oxford man, with ample means, he has had the opportunity which wealthy leisure gives of adding to literary pursuits the cultivation of pictorial art.

CAPE BRIDGEWATER.

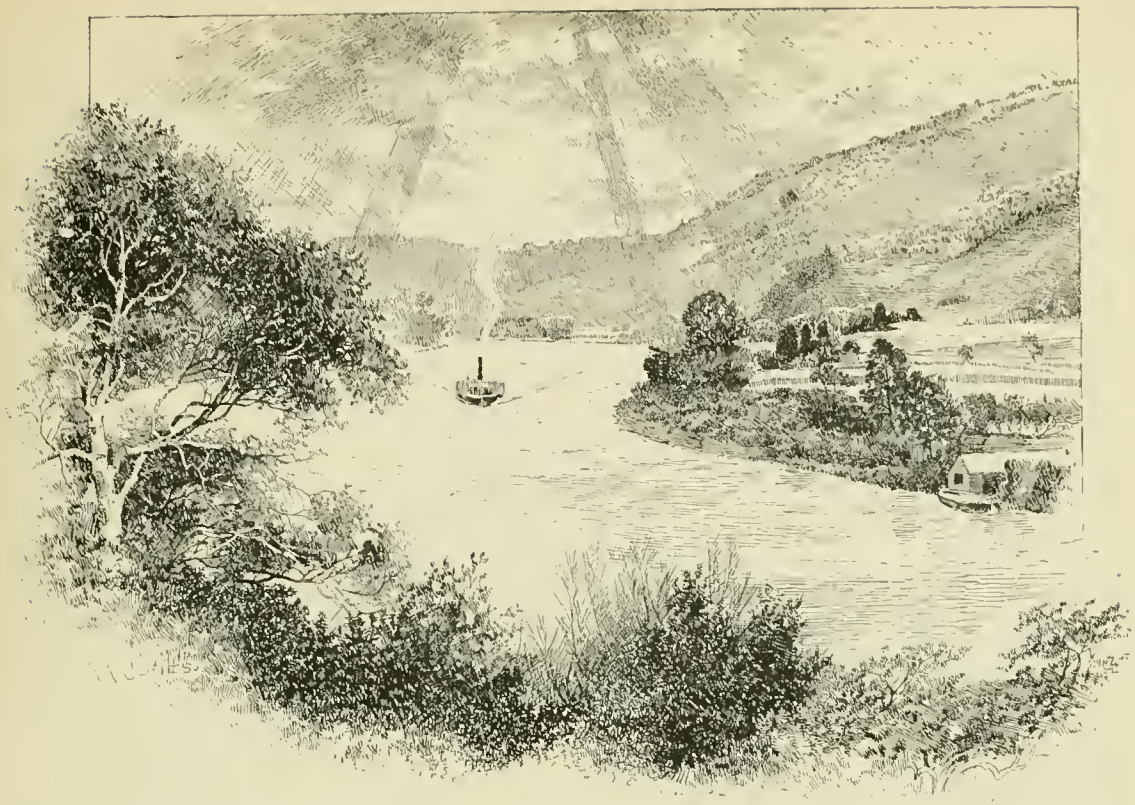
From the lawn of the house a good view may be had of the Lake of Colac—from which the district takes its name—with the Gellibrand Mount on the opposite shore. The dense gum-forests have been left far behind; everywhere now there stretches the cultivated expanse of acclimatised English grass-pastures, where graze the sleek and finely-outlined mobs of the champion shorthorn herds of Australia. It would be too long to enumerate the aristocratic pedigrees of these thousand-guinea bulls, or to cull choice family legends of the great "FF" brand from the voluminous stud-herd books. Sufficient be it for us to admire, with only a layman's eye for the picturesque, the peaceful sunny ruminations of brown and red, brindled and dun, strawberry and white, with the cool shadows of their high-bred deportment on the fresh spring grass. Scions of their noble houses have carried their blue blood through all the colony. There were 10,000 head here once, but the herd is gradually dwindling now by intentional reduction in

favour of the universal wealth-giver of Australia—the Lincoln and the cross-bred ewe. And both of these have to contest the mastery of the pasture with the irrepressible rabbit. Mr. Robertson now spends £5,000 a year on the rabbit war, and maintains an army of trappers. The severity of the rabbit-scourge may be estimated by the extermination in twelve years of 5,500,000 of them, at a cost of £200,000.

From the lawn of "Glenalvie," the residence of Mr. Robertson's brother James, we can get an expansive view of the plain, and in a different direction may see the green Warrion Hills. But we will climb to the top of the Red Rock and get our last impression of the volcanic district of Victoria from the limitless expanse stretching away from its summit.

We are on the edge of the crater of an enormous extinct volcano, with over a dozen mountain-tarns below us, cupped in the lips of smaller craters. The distant Dead Sea is ninety miles in circumference, and covers an area of nearly 50,000 acres. Long fringes of little promontories jut from its north shore, detached at their extremities into little desert islands, in whose scanty reed-beds flocks of pelicans build their nests. The cultivated fields of crimson clover, lucerne, and rye-grass which intervene, terminate in warm golden fringes of bracken. Everywhere the land is rich and the soil generous. Only in its own dense, bituminous, and pungently salt waters does the animal creation seek in vain any sustenance for life.

Ages ago Vulcan was king here. The empire of the ox and the sheep is built on the ruins of his kingdom. The Fire-god idolatry of the aboriginal black is supplanted by the white man's worship of wealth; the golden calf has more devotees in Australia than ever he had in the Wilderness. To question his divinity is to evince your own insanity. But in gratitude for the wealth from which he is molten, Australia venerates no priest of the imperial god so highly as the pioneer who, in the toilsome beginnings of the "early days," laid the foundations of his temple, and wrested the ancient sceptre from the wombat and the kangaroo.



THE DERWENT NEAR NEW NORFOLK.

NEW NORFOLK AND THE LAKES.

The Start from Hobart—Bridgewater—Pulpit Rock—New Norfolk—How the Town was Named—Lake St. Clair—Lake Sorell—Two Irish Patriots—Lake Echo—The Great Lake—Bothwell—Lake Crescent—The Clyde.

OF all the pleasant excursions which await the tourist in Tasmania, none is more delightful than the water journey to New Norfolk. Railway communication has recently been completed between this township and Hobart; but the traveller in search of the picturesque will be wise in choosing to journey by steamer. He will thus enjoy twenty-one miles of river scenery scarcely inferior in beauty to that of the Rhine. The *Monarch* steamer makes five journeys to New Norfolk every week, leaving Hobart at 3.30 p.m., and arriving at its destination about 6 o'clock. Starting from the wharf, it goes round the front of the Domain, and passing in succession the Queen's Battery, the Regatta Ground, and Government House, it reaches a stretch of the river which is narrow as compared with the parts immediately above and below it. The course of the Derwent is here shut in between a series of freestone cliffs on the town side, and rocky, wooded hills on the other. These are collectively known as Bedlam Walls. At the end of this portion of the river we pass the Risdon Ferry. On our right lies the bay into which the Risdon rivulet discharges itself, and the hill on which stands the

cottage so long occupied by "the old member,"* as the late Mr. George Gregson is familiarly and affectionately called.

In front of us is Mount Direction, and at the foot of it a long, low, verandahed cottage, with a fine range of white farm-buildings. The river here widens out abruptly to a breadth of four miles. The view assumes the character of lake scenery. We seem to be shut in on every side. Away to our left is a deep bay, along which lies the district of Glenorchy, including the township of O'Brien's Bridge. By help of a binocular we are able to distinguish some fine hop-grounds extending to the water's edge, a very pretty little Gothic church, and some fine private residences. But the exquisite beauty of the Glenorchy Bay, backed, as it is by that portion of the Wellington range which shows the marks of the famous landslip of 1872—extending, as it does, for miles from end to end, and yet all comprehended in one unbroken view—showing a succession of farm lands running up the mountain side, but ever terminating in a region of brown forest, that extends to the mountain top—so entrances the eye that we scarcely care to notice particular objects in such a glorious panorama. An abrupt bend in the channel of the river carries us past this beautiful bit of lake scenery. For a mile or two the stream narrows, and winds about between high banks on the one side, and high hills on the other, till at length it widens out into a broad expanse of water, crossed at its further end by a very long, low bridge, as it appears from the distance. This is the Bridgewater Causeway, described elsewhere.† As the steamer approaches Bridgewater, the railway-bridge which crosses the navigable channel, is swung round, and the draw-bridge, which connects the main road with the Causeway, is drawn back, so as to leave an open channel, through which the boat passes.

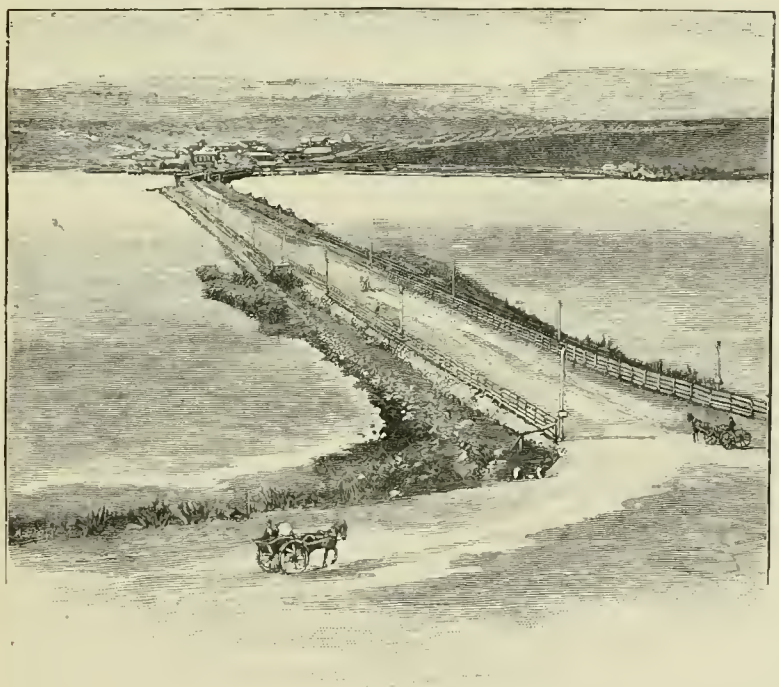
Up to this part of our journey we have had a succession of lake scenes. After passing Bridgewater, we soon leave behind us the wider parts of the Derwent, and have fine river scenery for the rest of our trip. On our left hand are lofty hills; on our right, undulating farm-lands. The river narrows as we ascend, and the banks on both sides increase in beauty, till, as we near New Norfolk, they rise into actual grandeur. A bend in the stream opens up the view of the township, and carries us under crags which overhang and almost seem as if they would fall and crush us as we pass. One of the finest of these was destroyed in 1885, lest it should endanger a new line of railway, which was then in course of construction along the left bank of the river. It was called the Pulpit Rock. Its removal caused a deep feeling of soreness in the minds of all residents of New Norfolk and of all to whom it had long been a familiar object. The vessel now glides smoothly up to the steamer wharf on the side opposite the township, and we see on the banks facing us some handsome houses, with well-kept gardens sloping down to the water-side. One of these was the residence of the late Sir Robert Officer, who was amongst the most distinguished public men of Tasmania, and for many years Speaker of the House of Assembly. It still belongs to his family, who use it only as a summer residence, but carefully maintain the beautiful order and cultivation which distinguished the house and grounds during the occupancy of its original owner.

* *Vide* Vol. I., pp. 162, 163.

† *Vide* Vol. I., pp. 166, 167.

The visitor to New Norfolk will land at the steamer wharf, and proceed to cross the river by a bridge which spans it a few yards higher up. The township is one of the oldest in the colony, and about the largest of the older townships. Its principal attraction is the varied beauty of the scenery in its neighbourhood. It has some good private houses, but nothing ornamental in the shape of public buildings. It has a reading-room and library, with a tolerably good collection of books. At the back of the library rises a round-topped hill of easy ascent, known as Peppermint Hill. From the summit one obtains a magnificent view

ON THE DERWENT.



THE BRIDGEWATER CAUSEWAY.

of the township and the surrounding country nearly as far as Bridgewater, looking down the river, and nearly to Macquarie Plains in the opposite direction. Bold and rugged mountains, the most remarkable of which is one called Collins' Bonnet, add variety and grandeur to the scene. One of the most interesting houses of the township is the Old Bush Hotel. Now that the Ship Hotel in Hobart has been demolished to make way for the new Bank of Van Diemen's Land, the Bush is probably the oldest hotel in the island. It was certainly flourishing and popular as early as 1830, if not earlier, and its popularity has lasted to the present day.

Another house to which interest attaches is a pretty cottage situated at the top of a small hill just at the bend of the river where a passenger by steamer first catches sight of New Norfolk. Viewed from the township, this cottage seems to lie just in the mouth of a grand and rocky gorge. It used to be known as Government Cottage, and was used as a summer residence by successive Governors down to the year 1858, when the new Government House at Hobart was completed. It was then sold; and in the hands of private owners both house and grounds have been greatly improved and beautified.

But the thing which gives New Norfolk its especial importance is its Asylum for the Insane. This is well worth a visit, though the interest is of a painful character. The management of the institution has unfortunately been made a matter of party politics in the legislative bodies of the colony, and an endeavour has been made to abolish the existing asylum and to remove its inmates to a spot nearer Hobart; but the visitor who goes through the wards and apartments under the guidance of a warder, or of one of the surgeon-superintendents, will be much impressed with the evidences of order, cleanliness, and kindness which characterise the arrangement; and, as regards the situation of the building, it would be very difficult to find in the whole island a spot combining all the advantages of the present site. Another circumstance which renders New Norfolk particularly interesting to visitors from England is the fact that it is the centre of a large area of hop cultivation. Anyone fresh from Kent or Hereford might fancy himself in his native county when the beautiful hop-gardens are in full flower. In the earliest days of the colony, and when it was a dependency to New South Wales, Governor Macquarie named the new settlement on the Upper Derwent Elizabeth Town, from the name of his wife. Macquarie had a passion for naming places. He it was who traced out the plan for Hobart Town, and gave to the streets the names which they still retain. Thus we have Elizabeth Street in Hobart, which, again, has given its name to one of the principal streets of Melbourne; Macquarie Street, named from himself; Argyle Street, from his native county; and Liverpool Street, from Lord Liverpool, the eminent Minister of State; and in Sydney we find the like traces of his taste for naming:* but the way in which the township got its present name was this:—Norfolk Island had been colonised by free settlers as early as 1788. At the beginning of the present century the Government of New South Wales wanted the island as a receptacle for the worst and most dangerous class of convicts, and the free settlers were induced to abandon it on the promise of large grants of land in New South Wales or Van Diemen's Land. Most of them chose the latter, and came down to Risdon at the time when it was the headquarters of the new colony. Thence they found their way up the Derwent, and a large proportion of them selected their grants in the neighbourhood of Elizabeth Town. Coming as they did from Norfolk Island, they called their new home New Norfolk, and in course of time this name superseded the original designation.

The basin of the Derwent comprehends a very large portion of the centre as well as of the south of the island. Its waters are supplied from the noble series of lakes

* *Vide* Vol. I., pp. 166, 167.

THE DERWENT AT NEW NORFOLK.

which lie high up, from two to three thousand feet above the sea-level, in the mountain regions of Central Tasmania. Each of these supplies one or more of the tributaries of the Derwent. Thus the main stream pours down from Lake St. Clair, the Dee from Lake Echo, the Shannon and the Ouse from the Great Lake and Arthur's Lakes, and the Clyde from Lake Sorell. These, combined, form that splendid river which is the glory of Southern Tasmania.

Of the lakes above mentioned, the most difficult of access is the St. Clair; but, with the exception perhaps of Lake Sorell, it is the most beautiful of all. The journey to it is made by way of Hamilton, a township which lies about twenty miles above New Norfolk, on the Derwent, at the point where it is joined by its tributary, the Clyde. Regular conveyances run daily between New Norfolk and Hamilton, but beyond this the journey must be by private or hired vehicle. A strong spring cart will be needed for the bush-roads, and perhaps one such will be scarcely sufficient, since provision must be made for several nights of camping out; a guide also is desirable. On leaving Hamilton, we follow for a few miles the course of the Derwent; then the road deviates into the valley of the Ouse, rich in corn-fields and meadows, and, rising with steep gradients for a dozen miles or more, lands us in a weird forest of dead trees. Tens of thousands of trunks stand around, tall, white, and grim, without a leaf on them, killed by some sudden frost or other unknown cause. Here the road becomes a mere track, and continues so for nearly thirty miles to Marlborough, a small hamlet on the Nive. A wall of mountains now closes the distant view. Two of these, Ida and Olympus, stand 4,000 feet high, the right-hand giant rent into bold, broken pinnacles; he on the left crowned with a cap of tremendous basaltic columns, as regular as any architectural structure.

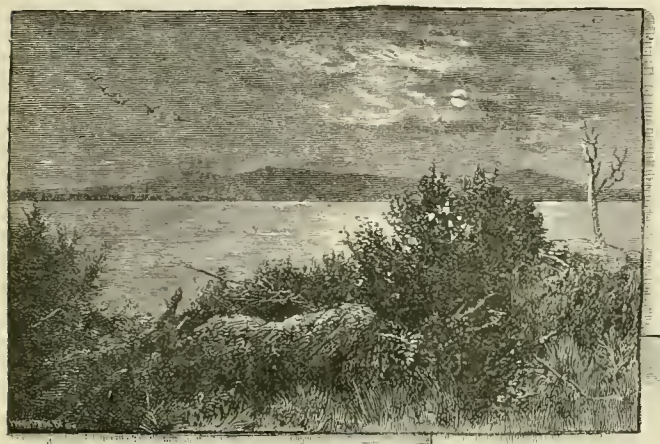
From Marlborough our course runs westward by a still rougher track, for more than ten miles, till we arrive at a shepherd's hut, the last habitation on our route. A rush of water breaks upon the ear, and a broad, broken torrent gleams through the bushes, dashing off from a narrow inlet of still, deep water. This is the Derwent escaping from its sources. Here all further progress used to come to an end, until a boat was brought up some years ago strong enough to stand the gusts of the lake. Embarking, we find the inlet rapidly widening, and then, with an abrupt bend, the screen of rocks is withdrawn, and the lake opens fully out to view. "A hundred years hence, when Australia has its tens of millions of people, and summer tourists by thousands wander over its recesses, Lake St. Clair will be as famous as Killarney is now, and will deserve it more. It is as grand as the Lake of Lucerne, though on a smaller scale. Houses will then dot its shores, and boats will glide gaily along from point to point. At present nothing can be more lifeless. Only one or two kinds of fishes have been found in its tremendously deep water; not a sound breaks upon the ear: and the only thing we saw was a solitary eagle, steering from mountain to mountain amidst cloud and mist." Thus wrote the late John Julius Stutzer nearly twenty years ago, and the description holds good to the present day. Regular settlement has not yet reached the shores of the lake. Even now it takes three days for a party of tourists, with tents, provisions, and all that is necessary for a camping-out expedition, to get

from Hamilton to Lake St. Clair, so steep and rugged are the tracks; but the result repays the trouble, as is shown by the above passage from the pen of one to whom the love of scenery was a passion, and who was familiar with all that is grandest in the mountain regions of Europe.

Scarcely less grand than Lake St. Clair, and not less beautiful, is Lake Sorell. It has, moreover, the advantage of being far the easiest of access amongst all the lakes of Tasmania. About half-way between Hobart and Launceston is the township of Tunbridge, situated on the main road, and approachable both by road and by rail. The lake lies fourteen miles due west of Tunbridge, and the road is safe for tandem or dog-cart. Numbers of visitors to the colony make this little excursion, for the sake of getting a glimpse of the lake region. It is, however, a mere glimpse that can be so obtained. The lake, including Lake Crescent, is fifty miles in circumference. Thomas Francis Meagher, known in the Irish insurrection of 1848 as "Meagher of the Sword," lived on the shore of this gem of the Tasmanian Highlands during part of his exile. His friend, John Mitchell, visited him there; and in the charming narrative of his captivity, which he published after his escape to America, he thus records his first impression of Lake Sorell:—"And now how shall I describe the wondrous scene which breaks upon us here, a sight to be seen only in Tasmania, a land where not only all the native productions of the country, but the very features of Nature herself, seem formed on a pattern the reverse of every model, form, and law on which the structure of the rest of the globe is put together—a land where the mountain tops are vast lakes, where the trees slip off bark instead of leaves, and where stones grow on the outside of cherries: After climbing full 2,000 feet, we stand in a moment on the brink of a steep mountain, and behold the Plain of Ross far below. The next minute, instead of commencing our descent into a valley on the other side, we are on the edge of a great lake, stretching

LAKE ST. CLAIR.

at least seven miles to the opposite shore, held here by the mere summits of the mountain range, and brimming to the very lips of the cup or crater that contains it. A cutting of twenty-five feet in depth would at this point send its waters plunging over the mountain to form a new river in the Plains of Ross. At another part of its shore a similar canal would drain it into the Lake River, which flows along the foot of the mountains on that side. As it is, the only outlet is through Lake Crescent and the Clyde; and so it comes to fertilise the Vale of Bothwell, and bathe the roots of our trees at Nant Cottage."



LAKE ARTHUR BY MOONLIGHT.

Then, describing a cruise in a sailing-boat, which he takes with his friend Meagher, he proceeds:—"As we float here at our ease, we are willing to believe that no lake on earth is more beauteous than Sorell. Not so berhymed as Windermere is this Antarctic lake; neither does the Cockney tourist infest its waters, as he infests Loch Lomond or Killarney; not so famous in story as Regillus or Thrasymene is our lake of the southern woods; nor is it so famous in literature as Como and Geneva. It flows not into its sister Lake Crescent with so great a rush as Erie flings herself upon Ontario; neither do its echoes ring with a weird minstrelsy as will ring for ever the mountain echoes of Katrine and Loch Achray. But, *en revanche*, see the unbroken continent of mighty forest that clasps us round here. On the north frowns the Cradle Mountain, with its grey precipices rising out of the rich foliage, one peak merely of the great western tier rising not more than 1,000 feet above the lake, but almost 4,000 above the sea. Opposite and beyond the Crescent Lake rises the grand Table Mountain. No villas of Elizabethan, Gothic, or Grecian structure crown select building sites along the shore. No boats carry parasolled picnic parties, under professional guides, to points of attraction, and back at evening to the big balconied hotel; but where gleams and ripples purer, glassier

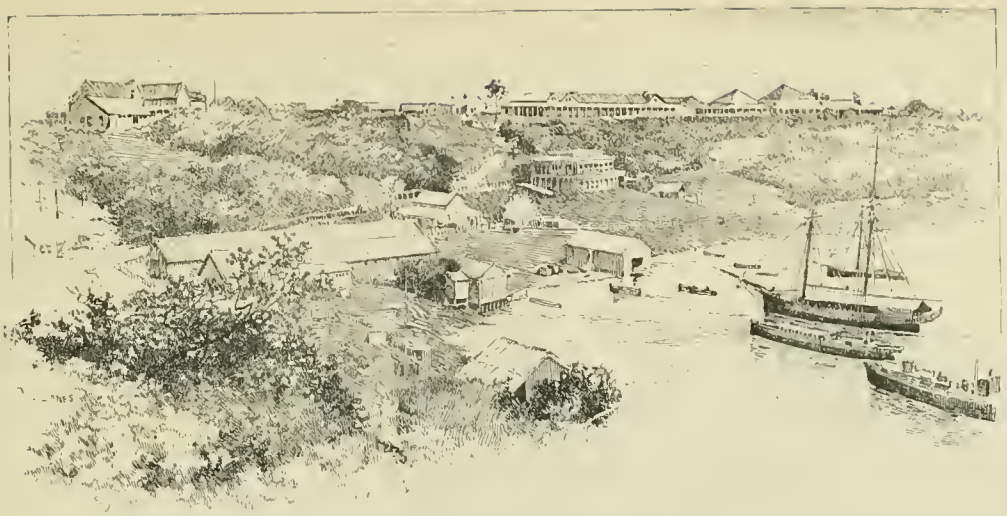
WESTERN SHORE OF LAKE ARTHUR.

water mirroring a brighter sky? Where does the wild duck find a securer nest than under thy tea-tree fringe, O Lake of the South! And the snow-white swan that 'on St. Mary's Lake floats double, swan and shadow'—does he float more placidly, or fling on the waters a more stately reflection from his stately neck, than thou, jet-black, proud, crested swan of the Antarctic forest waters? Why shouldst not thou also be famous, beautiful Lake of the Woods? Some sweet singer shall berhyme thee yet, *Fies nobilium tu quoque fontium.* Haunted art thou now by native devils only, and pass-holding shepherds whistle nigger melodies in thy balmy air. But spirits of the great and good, yet to be bred in this southern atmosphere, shall hover over thy wooded promontories in the years to come. Every bay shall have its romance, and the glancing of thy sun-lit, moon-beloved ripples shall flash through the dreams of poets yet unborn."

Numerous minor lakes exist in the central table-lands, generally supplying the waters of some tributary to the larger rivers of the island. Omitting mention of these, there are two principal groups of lakes. One consists of Lake Sorell with the Crescent Lake, Arthur's Lakes, and the Great Lake, all of which may be reached in two days' consecutive journeying by the track from Tunbridge. The other group is formed by Lake St. Clair and Lake Echo. These are reached by the route from Hamilton, already described in connection with Lake St. Clair. Lake Echo lies a few miles north of the track, up the course of the Dee, a tributary of the Derwent, and is considered by some who have visited it the most attractive of all the lakes. The Great Lake is less frequently visited than some of the others, but it is noteworthy from its magnitude, and is by no means deficient in picturesque surroundings. It is fifteen miles in length, while the deep indentations of its shores give it a circumference of nearly 100 miles. Its height above the level of the sea is 3,800 feet.

Mention has been made of the township of Hamilton, which lies at the junction of the Clyde and Derwent. Half-way between Hamilton and the source of the Clyde is the township of Bothwell, important as the centre of a large grazing district. It is perhaps the best starting-point that can be taken for an exhaustive tour of the lakes. By following up the course of the Clyde we reach Lake Crescent, whence the river derives its copious and perennial supply, and we can thence extend our tour to the other lakes of the same group; or by following down the course of the Clyde we come to Hamilton, and strike the route for the other group of lakes. Moreover, there is an hotel-keeper at Bothwell who makes a business of organising such expeditions. Nor is it necessary to go by way of New Norfolk and Hamilton to reach it. A coach runs daily from the Brighton Station of the main line, and this is far the quickest and easiest mode of access to it. The Southern Hunt Club meets periodically at Bothwell during the hunting season, and there is good trout fishing in the Clyde.

A little more than a mile from the township is a grand cascade. The whole volume of the Clyde pours over a perpendicular cliff, forty feet in height, with a roar which may be heard to a great distance; the deep gorge through which the turbulent stream rushes onward for about a mile is one continuous scene of wild and romantic beauty.



PALMERSTON FROM FORT HILL.

THE NORTHERN TERRITORY.

From Adelaide to the Northern Territory—Palmerston—Port Darwin—The Chinese—A Lack of Ladies—Sports—Natives—Natural History—Ants' Architecture—Gold—The Future.

ONE fails to realise the vastness of the gigantic island of Australia from a dry geographical description of its boundaries, and a statement of the precise distance from cardinal points to their opposites; and perhaps it is only to the lonely mariner who skirts its interminable coasts, or the intrepid explorer who starts at one end and hopes ultimately to reach the other, that the figures representing the area of Australia have any approach to a tangible significance.

The Northern Territory was provisionally annexed to South Australia in 1863, and is the elongation of that colony northwards to the Aripura Sea, Queensland and Western Australia bounding it in on the east and west respectively. Communication at present is afforded by vessels trading between Adelaide and Hong Kong as terminal ports, the voyage to the Territory taking about eighteen days to accomplish. The route (skirting the whole of the eastern and a good deal of the northern coasts) is full of interest, both from an historical and an artistic point of view. The Barrier Reef, a chain of coral islands 1,300 miles in length; Albany Island, with its reminiscences of man-eating savages; Whitsunday Passage, a scene of marvellous beauty; Cooktown, where the mariner whose name it bears refitted his good ship the *Endeavour* in 1770; Thursday Island, the centre of the pearling and *bêche-de-mer* industries—are only some of the attractions that dispel the monotony of the voyage. Rounding Cape York, which crouches down defiant into the waters of Torres Straits, the huge Gulf of Carpentaria is crossed, and the coast of the Territory brought into view. From the glimpses of it obtained through the palpitating atmosphere, it appears as a rather ragged edge to a noble picture. About forty miles before Port Darwin is reached, the embouchure of the River Adelaide is evident in the discoloration of the

water around us. It is one of the numerous tidal rivers of the Territory, and, though short, is navigable for vessels of good size. The splendid harbour of Port Darwin now opens to the view, and civilisation becomes apparent in the outline of the stately Government Residence. Passing Fort Hill, the quaint little town of Palmerston suddenly becomes visible. The site, rising steep from the water's edge, is a commanding one, and, in conjunction with the magnificent harbour, is admirably fitted to enable Palmerston to maintain its importance. The absence of chimneys from the houses is very noticeable; but this is a land where, from one year's end to the other, the bare suggestion of a fire as an auxiliary to comfort is sufficient to set rills of perspiration in motion. The cheeriness that consuming logs give rise to in colder climes is unknown; but the swinging punkah yields a delight that is more than compensation.

DOCTOR'S GULLY, PORT DARWIN.

BANYAN TREE, PORT DARWIN.

The backward state of the Territory, as compared with other parts of Australia, is partly due to the many failures in establishing a settlement. As early as 1823 Port Essington, lying to the north-east of Port Darwin, was made into a naval station for the protection of traders. In 1838 Captain Owen Stanley, of the *Britomarte*, aided in the re-establishment of the deserted post; and Leichardt in 1844 devoted his energies to its improvement, but with no lasting results. In 1862 Stuart accomplished his memorable journey across the continent. A large tree (identified by his description) has been discovered, and a large "S" cut into the bark in that year is still visible. His successful exploration gave a fresh impetus to the work of settlement; and in 1864 Finniss made an attempt at Escape Cliffs, near the mouth of the Adelaide River. Ineffective rule, troublesome natives, and an ill-chosen site soon resulted in disorganisation; and it was not until 1869 that the present town of Palmerston

was laid out on the shores of Port Darwin by Goyder, and a well-defined beginning made with colonisation. For a long time it was an uphill fight with untoward circumstances, in the shape of remoteness from other settlements, want of confidence in the resources of the settlement, native troubles, and the calumnies of disappointed adventurers; and South Australia felt no reason to be proud of her "White Elephant," as the Territory was often derisively called.

Port Darwin being the terminus of the British Australian Cable, the officials

SOURCE OF THE EDITH RIVER.

required to work it are a large factor in the population, and are noted for their social qualities and unbounded hospitality to visitors. Through their little office passes all the news that makes the rest of Australia quiver with exultation or despondency, and the negotiation of a loan or the success of a Beach first reaches the continent at this far-away speck on its surface. Another office transmits the messages thus received to Adelaide, by the trans-continental telegraph, the construction of which involved an immense outlay of time, pluck, and expenditure. A resident magistrate (appointed by the South Australian Government) controls the affairs of the infant country to some extent; but, as any important step must be sanctioned by the Government, he is not such an

autocrat as one would imagine. Three or four public-houses (all built on piles, to stay the ravages of the white ants, which are one of the serious hindrances to the settlement of the country) and the same number of stores and banks, are the principal buildings in the township, which is admirably laid out, and surrounded by reserves, the benefit of which will be found by future generations. The Chinaman is ubiquitous here, and performs the duties of laundryman, barber, waiter, nurse, and (of course) gardener with his usual suavity and at a reasonable figure; for though it does cost 1s. 6d. to have the hair removed by his skilful hands, the luxury in that climate is worth twice the sum. As no poll-tax is imposed, and their own land is within easy reach (only twelve days' sail), it is not to be wondered at that the bland Celestial outnumbers the sterner white by six to one, and is found everywhere and in every capacity.

A few of the naturalised Mongolians have introduced their better-halves to share with them the joys and sorrows of a Territorial existence; and the European who has the *entrée* to the abodes where dwell the almond-eyed fair ones must first go through the formality of an introduction, and bow and scrape in the most approved fashion (for the satisfaction of the husband) whilst passing through the ordeal. For your Anglicised Chinaman puts on conventionality when he puts his pigtail off; and in his awkward attempts to assume the polish of a gentleman cuts much the same figure as an obese aboriginal in a modern dress-coat. But as the cigar he offers is usually fragrant, and the inevitable nip of gin can be depended on, we may let the cloak of his generosity wind gently round the spectre of his gentility.

Some phases of the social life among the whites are peculiar. The disproportion of the sexes (which is obvious, even to a stranger, after five minutes' observation) has its peculiar advantages—at any rate for the ladies. Being in the minority so decidedly enables them to adopt tantalising tactics in their dealings with the many eligible and supplicating specimens of male humanity that Palmerston can boast of. The envy that the rest feel when one of their number at last secures in triumph (and without being a Mormon either) one-fifth or thereabouts of the total female population is about equalled by admiration of his undoubted strategic skill.

The British love of sport is manifested very strongly here, in spite of many adverse circumstances, and Palmerston races are something to be remembered. The residents cajole themselves into believing that they enjoy the spectacle of two or three gaunt, unhappy-looking quadrupeds of the calibre of a 'bus-horse breaking into a caricature of a gallop; but as the result (irrespective of speed) is just as satisfactory as a Derby Meeting, in that something must win, perhaps it is cruel to doubt a Palmerstonian's sincerity in this particular. Cricket, too, is attempted; but as the whole 500,000 square miles have hitherto yielded a bare eleven, it is obvious that the lack of competition somewhat checks the *esprit de corps* that might otherwise distinguish it.

Of course there is as yet not even the nucleus of a leisured class in the Territory. Everyone here has a vocation. If his calling gather wealth about him, his first use of it is to take a saloon passage in the next steamer for more favoured climes. The

hours of labour and dress are regulated by the climate. A bank clerk, clad generally in a thin singlet and white drill-trousers, with a handkerchief tied loosely round the neck, daily shuts his ledger with a gasp after bestowing four hours of the twenty-four upon it: and in all official departments the time is correspondingly short. Indigenous though the blackfellow be, he shows the influence of climate on his work and the time he does it in, as well as on his costume, in a most unmistakable way, for he dresses in nothing willingly unless it be a tempting red handkerchief, and takes all day to do nothing in. The visitor "doing the block" here for the first time, encounters these picturesque characters at every few steps, now standing in a knot pointing at him and discussing his appearance, swinging a punkah for a fig of tobacco and the delectation of some perspiring pale-face, or striding majestically along the footpath with a lavish display of anatomy that the visitor, perhaps accustomed to the discreet usages of a city, is somewhat astonished at. The females or lubras carry their pickaninnies in a peculiar way. The quaint little babes are perched up on the mother's shoulders, which they bestride, and on which they retain their position by grasping her Gorgon-like hair. The women are employed in the township as servants, and their reward in their own language is known as "tum-tum," or the crumbs that fall from the comparatively rich men' stables. Every evening at sunset the whole floating native element in the town betakes itself to the camp, about a mile distant, and after the meal that their united labours have earned for the whole tribe (for their kindness to each other in this respect is well known), they crawl into their wurleys and are soon oblivious to their many troubles. All night may be heard, should anyone be curious enough to listen, a succession of sounds, such as the clapping of hands produces. This is the result of various swarthy hands coming in contact with various parts of the contiguous swarthy bodies in pursuit of the blood-sucking mosquito; and long practice has enabled this operation to go on, though the operator is wrapped in slumber.

The natives of Australia are all more or less allied in appearance, habits, and customs, though in a disinclination for physical exertion these certainly must be awarded the distinction. Their intelligence is quite enough, with the exercise of a little energy, to enable them to rise many grades above their present debased condition; but they seem unable to conquer their nature, and must inevitably wither at the touch of civilisation. In the interior there are hordes who are fulfilling in their accustomed manner some wise but mysterious end of creation, and who resent the encroachment of the white man by spearing his cattle and robbing his stores; but there can be no doubt as to their ultimate effacement. Physically, some are fine specimens of manhood, but their aimless, nomadic, root-eating, alligator-egg-sucking existence robs of half its pathos the sentiment that their destruction provokes.

The lover of natural history will find here a veritable happy hunting-ground. Alligators, buffaloes, and kangaroos are numerous, and nearly every species of legged and feathered game is obtainable. If his intention should be to stick a pin through each variety of the beetle and other crawling insect abominations, his supply of this requisite of civilisation will need to be extensive. The mosquito, in four different fiendish shapes

(as residents know to their sorrow) is the murderer of sleep and comfort as one penetrates into the interior, and a net is an essential to sanity when the four varieties form a joint-stock company and rival each other in numbers, music, and ferocity. But Palmerston, as settlement increased, got rid of the pest, which must vanish, like the blacks, before the potent spell of civilisation. The climate at Palmerston is, on the whole, healthy—a fact which is due to its admirable position for receiving the benefit of the monsoons that blow regularly in these latitudes; and though the dance sometimes compels its votaries to change their entire dress in the course of an evening, and causes frequent demands on the liquor-supply, the pleasure of this latter process balances the pain of the former.

STUART'S TREE.

Some wonderful specimens of architecture by the industrious ants are to be met with in these regions. The weather, instead of enervating them, seems to be highly adapted for their constitutions, if we may judge by the results of their labours. These stand in clusters in various parts of the country, sometimes covering, at intervals of a few yards, as much as a hundred square miles. Some attain the imposing height of twenty-five feet, with a diameter of eight feet; and it is a remarkable thing that no one has seen them in course of construction. Even the natives are entirely ignorant of the date of construction of these quaint land-marks. They are angular in appearance, and have deep fissures down the sides—the result, perhaps, of innumerable storms. The solitary observer of one of these clusters, more especially if the ghostly moon lends her effect to the scene, is conscious of a strange feeling creeping over him as her rays play upon a vista of rugged summits stretching away beyond his vision. Their undoubted age inclines the imagination to weave round them the mists of antiquity, and tempts it into forgetting that they are only mounds of red earth, constructed by hymenopterous insects, by suggesting that they mark the sepulture of the illustrious dead of some primeval stage in the history of this continent. Meridional ant-hills, forming another "style" of architecture, are smaller, being generally from three to six feet high, with a width at the base of four feet, gradually tapering upwards, like a wedge, to nothing. Their edges invariably point due north and south, and the appearance that long rows of these rude compasses present is very peculiar.

But it is the white ants proper (the termes) that engross the most attention. They riddle the wooden buildings that Palmerston is chiefly composed of with the coollest defiance of every attempted preventive. Every article of furniture is cut off from contact with the floor by the immersion of its legs in vessels containing kerosene or some such powerful extract. The noise the busy pests make, when properly at work on the rafters or flooring of a house, is audible enough to be unpleasant. Outwardly, all looks well, for the shell of whatever is attacked is considerately left. Hence it is not un-

A NATIVE ENCAMPMENT.

common to suddenly flop through a floor that looks sound and strong. At a memorable banquet in the township some years ago one of the number made such little allowance for a lot of liquor that he attempted to address the meeting, with the result that he, his chair, and various delicacies (whose equilibrium was also disturbed by a desperate clutch at the table-cloth) fell indiscriminately under the table. Rising from the chaos he simply remarked: "Did you see that, gentlemen? These infernalsh (pause) white ansh (hic) are getting more (pause) infernalsh every day"—and resumed in the most unabashed manner what must have been a felicitous speech. Cypress pine is the only timber which this destructive ant has an aversion to, and the Chinese do a good trade in supplying the demand from the thick forests of pine that grow along the coast. Like the rabbit pest in other places, all methods hitherto tried to extinguish them have been only partially successful.

The Great Trans-continental Railway, from Port Darwin to Adelaide, is no longer the chimera that many considered it. Already its construction is being energetically urged on from both ends. It is only twenty-four years ago since Stuart pierced the heart of the continent by a route which the Overland Telegraph Line has since closely followed, and it is wonderful to contemplate the contrast between that time and the present. To begin a work of so stupendous a character as a railway 1,983 miles long, through a still only partially-known region, is as much indicative of the incomparable enterprise of the Anglo-Saxon race as their perfect confidence in this country's future. Its accomplishment, by cheapening everything, is to be the signal for a more systematic attack on the buried wealth of the Territory, and till then the present alluvial diggings and crude batteries must perforce represent its mining industry.

The Chinese diggers far exceed the whites at present, and their share of the annual export of gold is considerable. But it takes a European with much enterprise and a good constitution to brave the dangers that menace the inland gold-digger. Fever and ague are very prevalent in the marshy lowlands; and the tropical jungles after the wet season, when the sun shoots down his unmerciful rays, are hotbeds of malaria. The natives, too, are usually troublesome; and the price of the rudest fare is such that the hard-earned ounces quickly melt away into the capacious pocket of the importunate storekeeper. But the misfortune of the pioneer in this respect is the Chinaman's opportunity. His cheek-bones may perhaps be even more prominent than usual, his wan visage a trifle paler, and his gaunt anatomy on the whole more spectral; but he contrives to amble to and from his labours as cheerfully as if he didn't eke out an existence on viands that even a blackfellow's snub nose involuntarily twitches at. He is fast becoming a problem which calls loudly for solution, for he is usurping every branch of labour, to the exclusion of white men. All the gold he gathers from various sources is reserved for a final dissemination in the flowery land he hails from; and though he is and has been of undoubted service in developing the country, it is thought by many that the price paid for his efforts is excessive.

The enormous resources of the country are only beginning to be fully understood and appreciated. But successful pastoral investments have induced many capitalists of the southern cities to establish and stock stations representing large areas of magnificent pastoral country; and stock is pouring in from Queensland and New South Wales in a manner that betokens every confidence in the suitability of the country, for horned cattle especially. No less than five navigable rivers water the immense plains that are the prevailing feature of the country; and, in addition, it is secure from the disastrous droughts that kill enterprise in lower latitudes, from its tropical position, which ensures it an average annual rainfall of between sixty and seventy inches. The land bordering the rivers is covered with waving grass, some patches reaching the height of fifteen and sixteen feet, and has been proved to be well suited for the growth of tropical products. An experimental Government Garden near Palmerston contains nearly every variety of plant that flourishes in similar latitudes; and though the soil cannot be compared for richness with some to be found further

inland, the extraordinary results obtained show conclusively that to say the Territory will be the garden of Australia is a perfectly safe prophecy. Want of experience of the peculiar methods to be employed in a country which is unique, climatically and physically, has hitherto considerably militated against the successful cultivation of the sugar-cane, coffee, and rice plants; but the results are sufficiently encouraging to show that the planter has been more at fault than the country.

The latest geological reports are favourable beyond the anticipation of the most sanguine, in describing the mineral wealth of the country. The proper development of the auriferous part of it is hindered by the excessive cost of conveying and erecting the necessary plant in the interior; for what with freight by sea, extortion by land-carriers, and an abnormally high rate of wages (even when successful), it is merely using one fortune to get another.

But obstacles like these oppose the progress of every new country—they do not stop it. Stuart and Leichardt have not served in vain; and every stalwart pioneer even now face to face with the hardships and barbarism of the new land is nerved to fresh exertion by the voice of Nature, that speaks in the smiling rivers, the verdant forests, the boundless plains. Assuredly the country is one which has a great future before it. Besides its own innate strength, its grand geographical position, combined with the utility of such a harbour as Port Darwin, is an accessory by no means insignificant. The railway, when completed, will bring it into immediate touch with the other colonies; and the goldseeker, the planter, the squatter, and the husbandman, will throng to a land so favoured by Nature.

H.M.S. *NELSON* AND *ESPIÈGLE* AT ANCHOR AT DINNER ISLAND.

PROCLAIMING A PROTECTORATE.

Port Moresby—At Close Quarters—Natives in Full Dress—The Greatest Man—Men, Women, and Girls—A Shooting Party—Wedding Festivities—Yule Island and Hall Sound—Motu-Motu—Kerepuna—Bashful Aborigines—Argyle Bay—Cloudy Mount—Dinner Island—Cannibals in the Flesh—Teste Island.

ON a glorious sunny morning in November, 1884 (such a morning as is only to be seen in the tropics), we, the officers and crew of H.M.S. *Nelson*, found ourselves nearing the shores of that New Guinea which "we Australians"—for I, too, belong to the sunny South Land—have made such a fuss about of late years.

Providence, I regret to say, omitted to provide me with an eye for detail, and descriptions of scenery are not in my line. After three weeks in that land, I came away with a vague idea that where the country wasn't very green it was very barren, and that things generally ran to extremes. Port Moresby was certainly not pretty—hardly even tropical-looking—not to be compared with many of the South Sea Islands we had visited but a short time before. The barren hills around were very Australian—exactly like many a range of my fatherland; only here and there a native village, nestling among cocoa-nut palms, reminded us that we were within a few degrees of the Equator. The *Swinger*, the *Raven*, and the *Harrier* were already in port—quite an imposing array of war-ships; and an officer coming off reported that Mr. Romilly had hoisted the flag but a few days before our arrival. We *Nelson* fellows were quite excited about it; for though we had not particularly wanted to annex, yet as we *had* come so far, we should not have liked to go back without anything to show for our pains. However, our minds were soon set at rest, for the Commodore promptly decided that the thing must be done again—greatly, I should imagine, to the relief of the captain of the *Harrier*, whom the enlightened inhabitants of Port Moresby had decided to be

the biggest chief, principally on account of his figure, which is of proportions usually associated more with civic dignitaries than with seafaring men. These natives (not having been brought up with those lofty ideas of respect and veneration which so markedly characterise Young Australia) overwhelmed the captain with delicate attentions—walking round him, patting his stomach, poking him in the ribs, and plucking hairs from his great black beard, which would be carefully preserved and planted in their yam plantations, where they were expected to ensure a good harvest. Altogether, I don't think he grieved when a bigger chief, in the person of the Commodore of the Fleet, deposed him from his high estate.

A NEW GUINEA CHIEF.

The day before the proclamation we had a preliminary gathering of natives on board—chiefs from all the districts round, who had been gathered in by the *Swinger*, the *Raven*, and the *Harrier*—stark-naked savages, fifty in all, who were regaled on sugar and boiled rice, and shown round the ship by the petty officers. They were not nice guests—decidedly not. Long before we cast anchor we had smelled from afar whiffs of an odour which was anything but pleasant; and now that we had so many natives on board, there was not a corner of the ship that was not redolent of cocoa-nut oil. Taken by himself, I do not know that I hanker much after a New Guinea man; but with a dressing of oil on (and it is the only one he condescends to wear as a rule) he is a most undesirable neighbour. But they were our guests, and we had to put up with them; and certainly it was a novel sight to see these naked savages squatting round the mess-tins, shovelling in food as if for a wager—some with ship's spoons, some with their own utensils (carved out of cocoa-nut), which they had thoughtfully brought with them, the majority with their own five fingers, and these last were decidedly not the slowest.

If these chiefs were not over-dressed, they certainly indulged in a lavish use of ornament. Round their necks they wore necklaces of teeth—dingo's eye-teeth, and those of the less valuable wallaby; many of them wore slung on their breasts beautiful crescent-shaped pieces of mother-of-pearl, and on their arms wore a multifarious assortment of bracelets made of shell, of cane-beads, of bone, and (what more particularly attracted my attention) of beautifully-plaited split reeds. Of these last I procured a few with the greatest difficulty—not that the owners were unwilling to trade, quite the contrary; but these bracelets having been woven on the arm when the wearers were young, their arms had now grown to such a size that the flesh above and below bulged over these tight bandages in a disgusting way, and it was generally a physical

impossibility to remove them without cutting, which would have spoilt the specimens. However, we did manage to get some from the younger and thinner men. This tight-bandaging was not confined to the arms, for many of the "swagger" men (every man, in fact, who had any pretensions to being a dandy) wore round his body a bandage from five to six inches wide, woven of split reeds. This had apparently almost always been put on when the wearer was five or six inches smaller round the waist. Our stay in New Guinea was not long enough to make us admire the style. Since these girdles, too, are woven on, and there is no means of removing them except by a knife, they must, I fancy, as the wearer grows more and more corpulent, cause great discomfort, if not pain. But to pain, I conclude, the New Guinea man is indifferent; for in one case I saw, at Motu-Motu, a man with a strong wooden girdle about him, and so corpulent had he grown since it was put on that the wood was all but hidden from view, and yet he went about apparently quite unconscious that he was almost cut in two.

Through the cartilage of the nose is worn either a piece of carved bamboo or a bit of polished bone, often nine inches long and proportionately thick, which lends a decidedly ferocious cast to the countenance, and must be terribly in the way if the New Guinea youth ever indulges in those tender greetings which are not uncommon in more civilised lands. The ear, too, is not forgotten; indeed, the lobe is used by many people as a pocket for many small articles which cannot conveniently be hung on outside; and, to accomplish this end, a hole is pierced in the lobe—a good big hole—and a green chip of banana-leaf (tightly wrapped up) is inserted. When the pressure of the fingers is removed, the leaf naturally expands a little, and so keeps on enlarging the hole, causing no little pain. Most of these chiefs wore their hair frizzed out round their heads very much in the shape of a huge mop; and adorned it sometimes with strings of shells and teeth, sometimes with neat pieces of mother-of-pearl, and sometimes with head-dresses made from the feathers of the valuable bird of paradise, or the commoner cassowary or cockatoo. Their toilet was completed by a long wooden comb or head-scratcher, intended for use at least as much as for ornament.

Conversation was carried on with our guests through Mr. Lawes, a handsome and intelligent man in the prime of life, the beau-ideal of what a missionary ought to be. The majority of the flock were benighted heathen, and he good-naturedly acted as interpreter for the lot; but the majority at least of the chiefs utterly refused to believe (seafaring men though many of them undoubtedly were) that the ship was made by human hands, but persisted in regarding H.M.S. *Nelson* as something quite supernatural sent from heaven or elsewhere to help Her Most Gracious Majesty to annex New Guinea.

We, on our part, had considerable difficulty in choosing the most important chief, the tendency being to select the biggest and most savage-looking man; but, finally, on the missionary's suggestion, the Commodore chose Boevagi, a scrubby individual of medium height, who had actually made some attempt at clothing, for he wore a dirty flannel shirt and a red tennis-hat, which he kept on all the time, as

being more dignified. Afterwards we discovered that he had another recommendation, in the shape of a pretty daughter, a girl who looked twenty and was probably fifteen, and whose clear copper-coloured complexion and soft dark eyes made her decidedly the belle of Port Moresby. Into the hands, then, of this young lady's papa was delivered, with much ceremony, the stick of authority; which was distinguished from all other sticks by having a silver florin let into the top, with the Queen's head uppermost.

Next day was the great show we had come up to see; so we donned our cocked hats, swords, and epaulettes, wherewith to annex. All the way up we had been practising *feus-de-joie*, and had intended to land field-guns, but that part of the ceremony had to be dispensed with, for the water shoaled so rapidly that we were unable to bring the launch close in, and had to content ourselves with landing small-arm companies and marines. It is hardly necessary to describe the ceremony, it has been done so often. It will suffice to say that the blue-jackets, marching up, formed in square, two midshipmen carrying the colours and standing opposite the staff on which the jack was to be hoisted, and then the performance was gone through for exactly the fifth time. The natives, too, took the smallest possible interest in all this flourish of trumpets, only one or two peeping out of the huts, and about twenty or so being ranged under the mission-house, probably on show by the missionaries. It is only fair to state that most of the men had left the village on an expedition down the coast to procure sago, and on those who were left the ceremony had probably palled long ago.

The people soon understood that, unlike the missionaries, we all, officers and men alike, were bent on trade, and they on their side appeared equally willing, for a consideration, to part with all they possessed, from their nose-ornaments and head-scratchers to their wives and children. The water round the ships was alive with canoes containing yelling, shouting "niggers," each holding up whatever he thought valuable or most tempting. One fellow came off in a little canoe, and having literally parted with all he possessed, was shoving off, when I noticed he had a remarkably nice pair of paddles, made of a dark-coloured wood, with blades shaped like a long and graceful leaf. For one trade-knife (I think, value about 3d.) he handed them over, and then was obliged to wait patiently alongside till a shore-going boat towed him home. I also got from another fellow a very pretty model of a New Guinea canoe, which I suppose he must have made for his own amusement, displaying no little artistic skill therein. It was of light, soft wood, with the usual outrigger and mat-sail which all New Guinea canoes possess: both ends alike were adorned with carved figure-heads brightened with some white pigment, and the sides with rough carvings and paintings of fish, while at regular intervals were strung tassels of cowries. It cost me no less than three sticks of trade tobacco to become the possessor of this masterpiece of savage art, for its owner evidently valued it highly, though of what use it could have been to him I cannot conceive. Certainly, if he had hung it up on his drawing-room wall—as is the fashion, I am told, nowadays—it would have been lost to him and the world as well, for inside his house the New Guinea native

dwells in perpetual gloom. I ventured, as in duty bound, into several of these uninviting residences, and found them all alike—dirty, dark, and smoky, with an indescribable odour, of which the chief component was cocoa-nut oil, pervading the whole place.

The men struck me as being very lazy—certainly there is some excuse for them; the climate, the moist enervating heat of the tropics, is terrible. But the women, on the whole, were industrious. A pig is a far more expensive luxury than a child, or even a woman; a wife I could have bought for three sticks of trade tobacco, but a pig I could not get at any price. I did negotiate the purchase of a baby (a little brown, odorous, greasy youngster), but difficulties of packing prevented me from bringing him down south.

Some of the girls were not bad-looking, and all were got up regardless of expense in the way of ornament; but as soon as a woman marries (and of course they all do marry), she resigns the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, takes off most of her savage adornments, shaves her head, and ever after, when not quite bald, presents about the upper regions the appearance of a very much worn-down old blacking-brush. They never wear hats or head-coverings of any kind, and though the men as a rule seem to keep in the shade, I have seen the unfortunate women working in the burning tropical sunshine; but, in spite of some of their heads being naked as billiard-balls, I never heard of them taking any harm.

Shooting parties were allowed, and everyone, you may be sure, was eager to explore in this unknown land. While here I was lucky enough to take part in a really grand expedition about twelve miles up country, to a river the name of which I have forgotten, if ever I knew it. We provided ourselves with all necessaries, and a good deal that was unnecessary, in the shape of three guides, who were an intolerable nuisance, for they ate more than all the rest of us put together, and even after a good meal appeared ready to faint with hunger; while the track was so clearly defined, the natives so friendly, and the villages so numerous, that we should have got along every bit as well without them. We had with us two horses: one was laden with our goods and chattels, and the other we took it in turns to ride. Our progress was necessarily rather slow, for no one can walk briskly in the tropics, and we were so hot and weary when we reached our destination that a bath in the river seemed most desirable. Hardly, however, had we dipped in its cool waters, than a wild yell of "Alligator!" sent us all promptly to the shore. Our game principally consisted of kangaroo, wallaby, and the beautiful-crested goura pigeons, which it really seemed a shame to shoot; but I have never ceased to regret that mortal terror prevented me having a pot at an alligator. Close to our camp we saw the first of those tree-houses which we had heard so much about as being common in New Guinea. This specimen (a veritable little nest) was built on a platform perched in a eucalyptus, about seventy feet from the ground. I could not help speculating, as I looked up, on what would be the feelings of the proprietor if, on looking down, he should espy an enemy preparing to cut down the tree in which his castle stood. He would have a nice little problem to solve when his spears, arrows stones, boiling oil, or whatever they use as a means of defence, should have run out.

COMMODORE ERSKINE READING THE PROCLAMATION AT THE MISSION HOUSE, PORT MORESBY.

At Port Moresby lie some interesting relics, in the shape of several large waggons which some far-seeing individual shipped from Sydney for the purpose of carting cedar down to the coast. Unluckily he omitted to provide the very necessary bullocks, and therefore, since New Guinea produces nothing in the shape of an animal larger than a pig, the cedar is still growing in the forest, while the waggons are rotting on the beach.

Some of our fellows were contemplating matrimony, and on the day before we left this place was enlivened by wedding festivities. A Samoan teacher was married to a native woman (a convert), and all went merrily till the afternoon, when the bride and bridegroom left in the *Ellangowan*, the mission schooner, for a distant part of the coast. Then, indeed, the proceedings became rather painful, even to an uninterested onlooker, for the bride's relations (as I suppose they were) were overcome with the most frantic grief. They howled, yelled, scratched each other with their long nails, beat their breasts, and cut themselves with shells and sharp stones in the most ghastly manner, apparently quite indifferent to consequences. One old woman, probably she was the bride's mamma, covered herself with hideous gashes, and bled so freely that, had she not been to the manner born and accustomed to this sort of performance from her youth up, she must surely have died.

The next day we left for Hall Sound and Yule Island, piloted through almost unknown waters by the captain of the *Ellangowan*. The latter place is more like a gentleman's park in England than an island in the tropics, so free is it from scrub and jungle of all sorts. The natives at first seemed hostile, crowding down to the beach and threatening us with their spears; but the Commodore did not order us under arms, as we fully expected, and the staff landed just as usual, the captain of the *Ellangowan* merely going forward a few steps and shouting out some words of greeting in their own tongue. Soon we were on excellent terms, the savages mixing with us, shouting "good-day" (all the English they could muster), and allowing us to take all sorts of liberties, even to pulling out their combs, which is, as a rule, the greatest insult one man can offer another. However, they soon became accustomed to that sort of treatment from us, and probably set it down, among other strange things, to the vagaries of the British naval man.

From Yule Island we went on to Hall Sound to do a little more annexing, and really it is remarkable how soon that description of amusement palls. At first every man in the ship was all anxiety to take part in the ceremony, but by the time we reached Hall Sound, only those who were absolutely obliged turned out to listen to the strains of "God Save the Queen" and see the flag hoisted. I am not a musical man myself, and there has been a haunting fear in my mind that some day I may inadvertently omit to pay those marks of respect to Her Majesty which are her due; now, thanks to our New Guinea cruise, that fear has fallen from me, for after hearing it about twenty-five times running, I believe I should recognise "God Save the Queen," even if it were not played in honour of an annexation. One of the blue-jackets turning out with a camera endeavoured most religiously to take photographs of the proceedings, but the result was hardly worthy his efforts, for

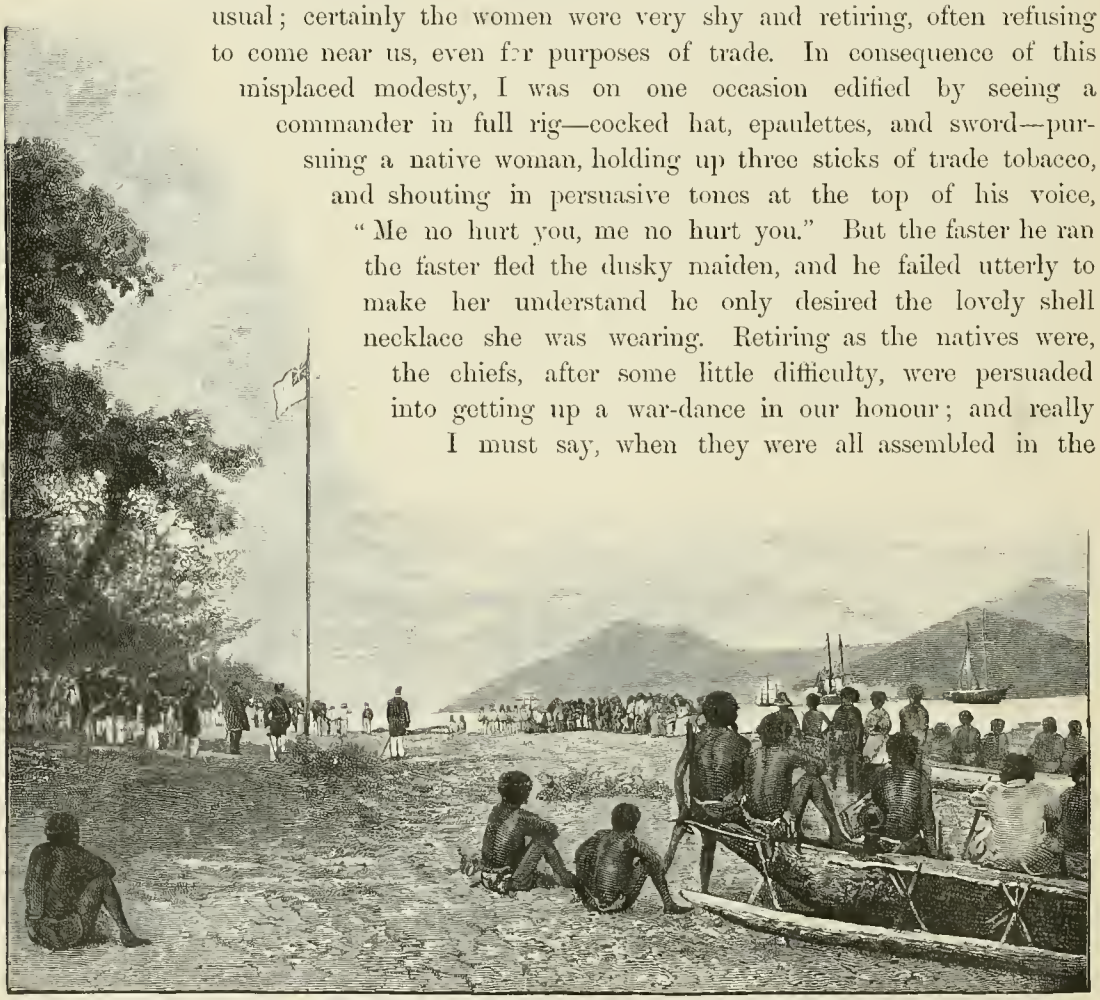
our *feus-de-joie* generally made the whole picture look one big patch of smoke. With scenery, however, he was much more successful, and I got from him two really nice pictures of Port Moresby. He tried several times to photograph the natives; but, as a rule, the moment our artistic friend put his head under the black cloth his subject bolted in mortal terror of witchcraft and sorcery. Since my return, however, I have received from an unknown hand some excellent photos of my dusky friends, so I suppose someone succeeded in convincing them he meant them no wrong. Here at Hall Sound we met the only queen in New Guinea, an ugly woman, tattooed all over most hideously to our benighted eyes. Contrary to custom, although she was married she had not shaved her head, and her long black hair, uncombed and unkempt, fell down her back in great matted clumps, which made us reflect that the stubbly heads of her humbler sisters had something to recommend them in the way of cleanliness. For garments, her majesty wore, like the rest of her subjects, a short reed petticoat. This dusky specimen of royalty was most anxious to learn all she could about Queen Victoria, with whom she evidently thought such great folk as we were must be on the most intimate terms.

From Hall Sound we went on to Motu-Motu, a large village, and by far the wildest and most savage-looking place we had yet visited. There was a tremendous surf on here; but the chief, thinking doubtless that the waves which refused to respect King Canute could hardly fail to treat with all due deference personages so great as the Commodore and his staff, ordered out the boats, and off we went. At first all was well; but just as we had nearly reached the shore, a tremendous wave swept down on us, all but capsizing the boat, and thoroughly drenching all in her. The natives, who lined the beach, raced down into the water and offered to carry us clear of the waves on their backs—an offer not to be lightly refused; so most of the staff accepted, and rode pickaback ashore, looking as graceful as they could in that dignified position. Not till dry land was reached did the disgusted riders discover that the inhabitants of Motu-Motu are wont to smear themselves with bright red clay to keep off the sun or the mosquitoes. This clay did not stay on their backs, as it ought to have done, but communicated its brilliant colouring to our damp uniforms, so that the festive appearance of the staff at Motu-Motu may be imagined. Perhaps that accounts for the much greater interest these people took in our proceedings, standing out in marked contrast to the apathy and indifference we had found at Port Moresby. After the ceremony the natives crowded round us, lifting up our clothes to see if we were as white underneath as we were above. The fortunate individuals who had been lucky enough to smuggle "'baccy" or trade-knives ashore in the pockets of their frock-coats did a big trade here, for every man was anxious to sell whatever he had. They were good-natured, too, and wanted to show us round their houses and a big temple they have sacred to some heathen god or other, of whom (although they are not very devout) they are mightily afraid.

While we were here a most "swagger" chief came down from the hills and was introduced to us. Though he wore no clothing beyond the regulation whipcord, his

ornaments were something wonderful to look upon; and, tall and handsome, he was every inch the noble savage. As a set-off, we were shown Kasi-kin, the very ugliest man, I verily believe, that ever existed. No words of mine could adequately paint him; but he seemed himself rather proud of his enormous ears, which were so long that the lobes hung down over his shoulders.

Motu-Motu was our farthest point to the west. Then we turned our faces eastwards, and having stayed a day or two at Port Moresby, went on to Hood Bay, or Kerepuna, as the natives call it. Here is a large village nestling on the shores of a most lovely bay, beautiful with the entrancing lavish loveliness of the tropics, and so winding that the *Espiègle*, though close at hand, was completely hidden. These same *Espiègle* men were beforehand with us; for on the staff landing in a bare space among the huts, we were amused to read, written on a board in large letters and stuck against a post, the legend, "Espiègle Square," and in the newly-named square we once more annexed. The natives here struck me as being somewhat cleaner and quieter than usual; certainly the women were very shy and retiring, often refusing to come near us, even for purposes of trade. In consequence of this misplaced modesty, I was on one occasion edified by seeing a commander in full rig—cocked hat, epaulettes, and sword—pursuing a native woman, holding up three sticks of trade tobacco, and shouting in persuasive tones at the top of his voice, "Me no hurt you, me no hurt you." But the faster he ran the faster fled the dusky maiden, and he failed utterly to make her understand he only desired the lovely shell necklace she was wearing. Retiring as the natives were, the chiefs, after some little difficulty, were persuaded into getting up a war-dance in our honour; and really I must say, when they were all assembled in the



PROCLAIMING THE PROTECTORATE AT STACEY ISLAND.

square, they were gallant-looking fellows. There was not much else remarkable about Kerepuna, except that such of us as were sportsmen got some good shooting, and this had now become a matter of great importance, and all shooting parties had been anxiously exhorted to remember the failing flesh-pots on board; for our provisions were running short, and with what were left the hot weather did not agree. The potatoes were—well, uneatable, to put it very mildly; the cheese showed a strong disposition to go off on foraging expeditions of its own, leaving us nothing but the rind; and the salt horse no one but our plucky mess-caterer could stay in the room with. If it had not been for tinned meat, the rest of us would really have starved.

On leaving Kerepuna we went on to Argyle Bay, which outrivals the former in point of loveliness, but the natives were markedly different; for, far from being shy, they were such atrocious thieves, that a Melbourne pickpocket would have "had no show" beside them. A blue-jacket going ashore with his pockets full of trade-gear found, on reaching the village he had not one stick of tobacco left, and I met him returning hurriedly to the ship, holding on to his jacket, lest it also should disappear in the same mysterious manner. There was little else to remark about the place, save that the natives have advanced one step in civilisation, and have taken to wearing a banana leaf, generally attached to a band of plaited human hair. From Argyle Bay we passed over to Stacey Island, where, as there is a mission station, the natives are by no means bashful. Opposite Stacey Island, on the mainland, is Cloudy Mount, up which, of course, we had to go, taking with us a number of the natives, who were bound over to carry us down, should we faint by the way. As usual the smallest midshipman appeared with a gun considerably longer than himself; this he stuck to manfully all day long and brought safe down again, considerably to the surprise and relief of his friends.

Dinner Island was our next calling-place, a small island close in shore among a number of others. The *Swinger*, which had been there before, acted as pilot. It was pretty generally noted that almost before her anchor was dropped her private skiff was seen pulling ashore, and it was rumoured that her captain was anxious to inquire into the safety of a certain pig which he had purchased on his last visit. In spite of the good price he paid, that pig was not forthcoming, and, after annexing, the *Swinger* went on and took some *bonâ fide* cannibal chiefs on board, while we in the flag-ship passed on through the China Straits to East Cape and the Kilerton Islands, which we found nearly five miles out of the position marked on the charts. Here the *Swinger* again joined us with the cannibals. I did not think a live cannibal would have disgusted me, yet so it was; nor was mine a singular experience, for the whole ship's company, on inspecting them, decided that there was something so very repulsive about them that none of us envied the *Swinger* her passengers. The weather was hotter than ever, and one of the marines created quite a sensation by fainting dead away during the ceremony, and toppling over—bayonet, musket, and all. Of course he would have died rather than make the slightest sign. Perhaps this was the reason the ceremony was scrambled through rather hurriedly. We were getting very tired of the whole thing, and if the

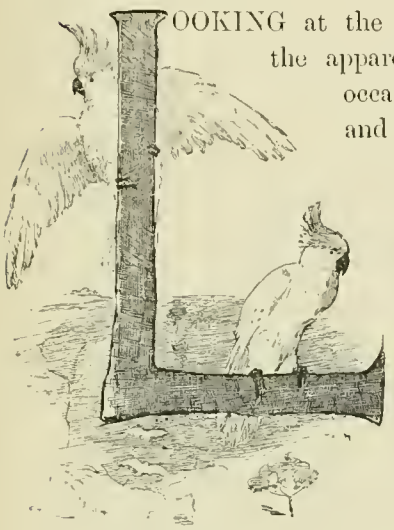
Commodore was not sick of it, the ship's opinion ran that he ought to have been.

They seem to be a pugnacious people about these parts, for we were shown, laid out in a hut, the bodies of some men and women who had been killed in a raid by the East Cape natives. Here was a grand opportunity, and in a long speech it was explained that since Queen Victoria had been so good as to take them under her protection they must fight no more. I only hope the admonition has had the desired effect, and that they have not fallen out over the stick of office left behind with the biggest chief. Kilerton was our farthest point, and we turned back and once more cast anchor at Dinner Island. The captain of the *Swinger* had made over his interest in that pig to me, and the whole mess were anxiously looking forward to pork for dinner; so I went ashore and did my level best to arrive at piggy. All in vain. The women were not to be got over by any blandishments I could lavish on them, and, despite my best endeavours, the prize was not forthcoming; so we were obliged to console ourselves with the reflection that in all probability he was not dairy-fed and would have disagreed with us.

At Teste Island we picked up the other ships, and had a grand show-off for the last time. It was still terribly hot, and rain was falling—a slow drizzle, which regularly steamed us. The colours, too, had a good ducking, for the skift with the midshipmen in charge capsized in the surf, and they were rolled over and over in the water. They stuck manfully to their charge, however, and arrived at the flagstaff in a dripping and half-drowned condition. Warned by their fate, the staff were landed higher up in a sheltered cove, and had the pleasure of tramping to the rendezvous through heavy sand. Thus was the ceremony performed for the very last time. At its conclusion we weighed anchor and turned our faces southward, truly glad, after little more than three weeks, to see the last of New Guinea. Not till we were safe through Suckling Passage, fourteen miles from Teste Island, was our extra look-out, the midshipman at the masthead, relieved from his onerous duties and we considered ourselves once more on the high seas.

RIVERINA.

Monotony—Salt-bush—Drought—A Ghastly Scene—Glorious Nights and Trying Days—*Lusus Naturæ*—Distinctive Traits—A Dreary Life—The Plains at their Best—Deniliquin—The Streets—The Water-Tower—Drainage—Races and Sheep Shows—The Melbourne Trains and the Hay Coach—"Pretty Pine"—Wonganilla—The Pine Ridge—"Trotting Cob"—Old Man Plain—Hay—On the River—A Mighty Thirst.



COCKATOOS.

LOOKING at the map of New South Wales, we are at once struck by the apparent flatness of the land west of the coast range. Only occasionally does a so-called "mount" break the monotony, and on investigation that proves to be what in other and more favoured lands would be counted a very small hill indeed. Rivers there are, it is true, especially just north of the Murray, where there is a perfect network of streams (hence the name Riverina)—streams which twist and turn with many devious windings, sometimes splitting up the main channel into many small branches known as billabongs, oftener flowing in one sluggish current with a fall of less than three feet in the mile (the Darling has not as much in 100 miles), yet finally, spite of many deviations, making their way westward to swell the volume of the mighty Murray. On the map the rivers and creeks twine and twist in and out in apparently inextricable confusion. It is all but impossible to tell where one ends and the other begins; and yet the first impression of the stranger set down in Riverina in the summer-time would be that he had come into a dry and barren land, where no water is. The sky is one clear, cloudless expanse of blue, so deep as to be almost purple; the atmosphere is without humidity, dry almost as the Sahara itself; and many of those creeks, marked so plainly on the map, are during the greater portion of the year mere chains of water-holes, between which a man may cross on foot dryshod if indeed they be not dried up altogether. Plains, dead level plains, stretch far as the eye can reach—plains bounded, like the ocean itself, only by the horizon, where the scorching sun pours down his pitiless rays, with never a tree nor a shrub that might afford some slight shelter from their fierce strength. "No permanent water" may be seen marked on the maps, and with equal truth might have been written "No permanent grass;" for unless the season has been exceptionally good, more rain than usual having fallen, grass, like the trees, is conspicuous by its absence. Its place is taken by acres upon acres of salt-bush, of a dingy blue-grey colour, growing in little tufts or bushes never more than six or eight inches above the surface of the ground. The "old man" salt-bush, it is true, is to be found in patches about the plains, and grows to a height of six or eight

feet; but it is not very good feed, and sheep will only eat it during a very dry, or, as colonists say, a "bad" season. Again and again, too, are to be seen great bare patches of red earth, where nothing whatever in the shape of vegetation grows, and which look hot and uninviting in the glaring sunshine.

Yet these plains are by no means destitute of life, barren as they may seem to the new-comer. Their value as a wool-growing country has long been known to the people of New South Wales, and every mile of ground is absorbed by extensive sheep runs. It is true the land will only carry about one sheep to five acres, but where a man counts his possessions by the square mile, a few hundred acres more or less barren make little difference. Want of water is, of course, a drawback; but many runs have a river frontage for a few miles; and, if not, every drop of water that falls from the heavens is carefully preserved in tanks and dams, and as a rule is found, with care, to tide the squatter over the dry season.

Grass, as we have said, is often conspicuous by its absence. "Do you keep it under ground?" wonderingly asked a Church dignitary, fresh from the green pastures of the old land, on beholding for the first time the plains of the Riverina, from which he was told many wealthy squatters hailed. And then it was explained to him that sheep thrive wonderfully on the salt-bush, grow excellent fleeces, and require but little water, and, moreover, will drink water so brackish that neither horses nor cattle will touch it; while sometimes even the heavy dew which in winter nightly wets the salt-bush will suffice them.

But when drought lays its iron hand on the land, then indeed are the plains desolate. The kangaroo and the emu abandon their favourite haunts, the big grey bustards—wild turkeys, as the colonists call them—are gone, and the tall native companions have moved away to cooler and moister climes. All the winter they are to be seen on the margin of the swamps, their graceful forms and pretty soft French-grey plumage showing out in marked contrast to the green rushes and swamp plants. Apparently, they pass all their spare time dancing quadrilles—at least, that is what it looks like from a distance. In and out they glide, in and out, cross over, and set to partners; and such perfect time do they keep that one listens involuntarily for the music. But the swamps and water-holes are dry now, and the big cranes have gone, taking along with them the black swans and the wild duck. Even the screaming parrots and cockatoos are rarely to be seen, and it seems to the traveller that every living thing has departed, save the crows and the flies, which are in such myriads that he reckons the plague of Egypt could have been as nothing to them. The helpless stock suffer terribly. For miles the barren plains are strewn with the dead bodies and the bleached skeletons of beasts—sheep, and cattle, and horses—that have perished of hunger and thirst; and the only sound on the dry, still air is the ceaseless, monotonous "caw-caw" of the innumerable crows.

One wonders where they come from in such numbers, those cruel, restless carrion crows, their glossy blue-black plumage sheeny as satin in the sunlight. Scavengers are they, cruel scavengers, always busy at their ghastly work, picking over the dry bones, pouncing on some carcass just newly dead, hovering over some poor beast, sick

and ailing, till at last it sinks to the earth, when they swoop down on it, tearing the quivering flesh from the bones almost before the breath has left its body. They are always there, those crows. Where there is no water, and apparently no food, there they are in countless numbers.

Occasionally are whispered pitiful stories of men lost on the plains, and the story is almost always the same; the details may vary, but in the main it is the same story. A

SUMMER ON THE PLAINS.

lost man wandering round and round in his tracks, as men will do once they lose their heads. No shade, no water, no food, no hope; nothing but salt-bush and sky—sky and salt-bush, and the waiting crows, adding a new horror to a terrible death. At first they fear him and keep at a distance, but as time goes on and he gets weaker, they grow bolder and come nearer, nearer, and nearer, till they wait in an ever-narrowing circle round him. He is horror-struck, he is hopeless, but for a time he waves them off. It can be only for a time, he despairingly feels; and they come again, closer and closer. The end must now be soon, he knows; and dazed and worn out as he is, he will still struggle to send one last message, one last good-bye to loved and loving ones far away. It may be but

a line scrawled in his pocket-book, that trembling hands and failing sight will scarce permit him to finish; or it may be an illegible scratch with his knife on his tin billy. When it is done, he raises his dim eyes once more, only to see the baneful gaze of the hundreds of obscene birds still upon him. His message may never—nay, probably will never—reach the eyes it is intended for; but he has done his best, and there is nothing now left to hope for but death—death, with the ever-watchful crows pressing closer and closer. Sight and sense are failing fast, but an overpowering horror of them seizes upon him, and he makes one last effort to drive them away. He would shout, but his parched tongue and swollen lips can utter no sound, and he waves his heavy arms feebly, then turning, falls face downward—at least he will protect his face—on the earth; and the watching crows press closer still. For the rest—only a merciful God knows the rest. Months after, perhaps years, his bleaching bones are found, and one more name is added to the long and sorrowful list of those who have been lost on the plains. And yet it is but rarely that a man meets with this terrible end. Once lost, of course the case is all but hopeless, unless help come from without, for the wretched man moves round and round in a circle, always returning, spite of himself, to the same place, till death puts an end to his suffering. The true bushman, however, never gets lost. He seems gifted with an instinct, a kind of sixth sense—we hardly know by what name to call it—which enables him to make straight for his goal, be it across the plains of Riverina, or through the dense scrub of Gippsland; and this without the aid of the compass, which, he will probably tell you, confuses him, and even though the sky be entirely hidden by clouds.

The sky rarely is hidden by clouds in Riverina, though. The stars shine out with a brilliance unknown in moister climates, and in the still, clear, hot nights one realises, with the Psalmist of old, that "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork." But those glorious summer nights bring with them trying days, when the sun has terrible power. The dark plain lies before him sweltering in the fierce sunshine—not a hill, not a tree, not even a shrub to be seen, far as the eye can reach. The unbroken horizon reminds him of the ocean, blue sea and blue sky: only here it is deep, cloudless, blue sky and blue-grey salt-bush. The air absolutely quivers with heat. There is no shade, not so much as would shelter a dog. No rock, in all this weary land, to cast its grateful shadow; and the thermometer rises to 140°, 150°; even 160° is not uncommon. The very ground is hot to the touch, the buckles and metal mountings of bridle and saddle scorch the fingers. His canvas water-bag, full at dawn, is shrinking slowly. His horse is foam-flecked, spite of his easy pace; and the traveller longs with an ardent longing for but one moment's respite from the heat. He raises his eyes, looks round once more on the quivering landscape, and it almost seems as if his wishes had been fulfilled, for before him he sees, its banks bordered by shady trees, a creek so close he can almost hear the trickling waters: he can see them plainly, for everywhere are frequent breaks in the belt of timber. Or else it is a little lake he sees before him, embosomed in cool green pastures shaded by drooping trees, whose shadows are reflected in the crystal-clear waters beneath. But ever as he advances the beautiful picture recedes; and yet, so

vivid is it, so clearly lies the scene before his eyes—nay, before those of his companions also—he can hardly persuade himself it is but the mirage, but a picture painted on the air, and before him is country as hot and as dry, as barren of trees, grass, and water as that he has just crossed. It is a deceitful atmosphere, and objects at a distance loom larger than they really are. It is sometimes impossible to tell whether a certain black thing apparently miles away is a man or only a crow. A man on horseback is visible at an immense distance, and the earthworks round the dams (or tanks, as they are called) which a paternal Government has placed at intervals along the stock-routes, to conserve the little rain-water that falls for the benefit of travelling stock, look large as mountains, till, on a nearer approach, they are seen to be very small hillocks indeed.

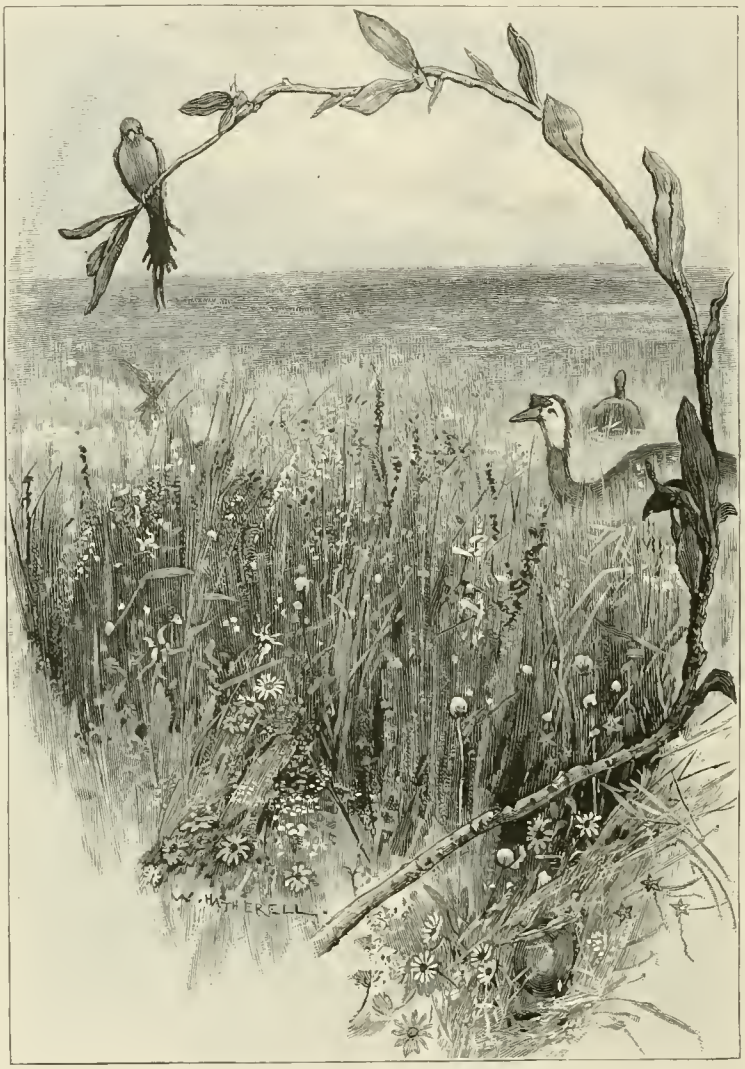
From the Murray to far beyond the northernmost bounds of New South Wales these plains extend, and surely never was seen more monotonous country on this earth's surface; so flat, so featureless, that it is difficult to imagine why the various names were bestowed. But in Riverina, features that would hardly be noticed in more favoured lands serve to break the monotony and divide one plain from another—the dry bed of a creek, a swamp (also usually dry), a clump of wind-blown gum-trees, or a sand-hill so low as scarcely to be noticeable, save for the creeping clematis, which in winter makes it a wealth of white flowers.

The Old Man Plain, which lies between Deniliquin and Hay, is perhaps the best known in Riverina, and is probably so called because, in Australian parlance, anything larger than common is "old man," as old man kangaroos, old man salt-bush. Hence this big, waterless, treeless plain is Old Man Plain, and woe betide the unfortunate who should lose himself on it. It is described on the maps as an "immense waterless tract without marked features," and generally it is desolate in the extreme. Desolate, too, the Old Man Plain is destined ever to be, unless some radical change take place in the climate, or science devise some means for increasing the water supply; for at present the rainfall rarely exceeds ten inches per annum, so that the land is useless save for grazing purposes. Lonely as it is, however, it is still within the bounds of civilisation, for the main stock-route crosses it, and the coaches pass twice every night; but farther north there are many and many tracts of country quite as large and infinitely more desolate. Here, miles away from the smallest township, miles even from the head station, is occasionally to be seen the solitary hut and small paddock of an out-station, where dwell perhaps a couple of boundary riders with their hut-keeper.

A more changeless, uneventful life than these men lead it is hardly possible to conceive. Always before them, winter and summer, is the unchanging salt-bush, varied but seldom by belts of scrub, wiry polygonum, sweet-smelling brigalow, or gidgia, the foul smell of which is enough to make a strong man sick. Their food is always the same—tea and mutton and damper, damper and mutton and tea; and in time they find themselves suffering from a mild form of scurvy, occasioned by their enforced abstinence from vegetable food. Vegetables, or a garden of any sort, it is often impossible to have, for water is scarce—so scarce that frequently there is only enough for drinking purposes. Should any man desire such a superfluous luxury as a wash, he must dig a

well, and may consider himself indeed lucky if he come upon water salt almost as the ocean itself.

Dreary as is such a life at most times, it must be still worse during those exceptionally hot summers which occasionally devastate the land—when day after day



WINTER ON THE PLAINS.

never a cloud flecks the deep blue of the sky; in the morning the sun rises in the east, a copper-coloured ball of fire: at noonday from the zenith he pours his fierce rays on the sweltering, shadeless plain; and the evening sees him set blood-red in the west, in the same cloudless blue sky. It is always the same, day after day, day after day; then, indeed, one realises that residents in Riverina may have too much of a good

thing, and sympathise, as did Westall's visitor to Phantom Land, "with the British sailor who, after cruising several years in southern latitudes, expressed an ardent wish to go home, 'if only to get away from the confounded blue sky!'" In such days as these the sheep die by thousands, and the thermometer rises to such a height that the very birds drop dead from the heat, and the settlers tell how birds and beasts alike lose all their natural terror of man, and crowd into the hut for refuge from the fierce heat; so that sometimes the occupant may take from beneath his bunk ten or twenty birds of different species, from the hawk to its natural prey the pigeon.

DENILIQUIN.

And yet these plains are not always barren and desolate. To see them at their best, they should be visited at mid-winter—such a winter as was that of 1886, when the drought of several years broke up. Then, indeed, it is easy enough to understand their peculiar charm. Overhead a cloudless blue dome, which out-rivals in beauty the vaunted skies of Italy; underfoot one vast sea of waving grass, waist-high, and spangled with wild flowers of all the colours of the rainbow. The air is dry, warm, and balmy; and if in the early morning the ground is white with hoar-frost, and all the little pools are covered with a thin crust of ice, long before nine o'clock the glowing sunbeams have driven all signs of winter away.

Numberless birds are to be seen—rose-coloured cockatoos, white cockatoos with sulphur crests, or white corellas with delicately-tinted pink feathers, and thousands of screaming parrots of every shade and hue. The water-holes are covered with wildfowl, and the native companions stalk once more about the swamps. A curious melancholy

ery is heard in the air, and a flock of black swans fly overhead, bound for some distant water. Dozens of emus are to be seen, and their huge dark-green eggs may be found by a little search among the long grass; while the wild turkeys, esteemed by colonists such a delicacy, abound. The plains are full of life and warmth, and the dreary hot summer is but a memory of the past.

With such a perfect winter climate, it is no wonder that the southern towns of Riverina are rapidly becoming a recognised health-resort for those whose lungs are affected; and justly so, for consumptive people who cannot live in the moister atmosphere of the coast towns, or the cold of Southern Victoria, still linger on in the mild and balmy winter of the river plains.

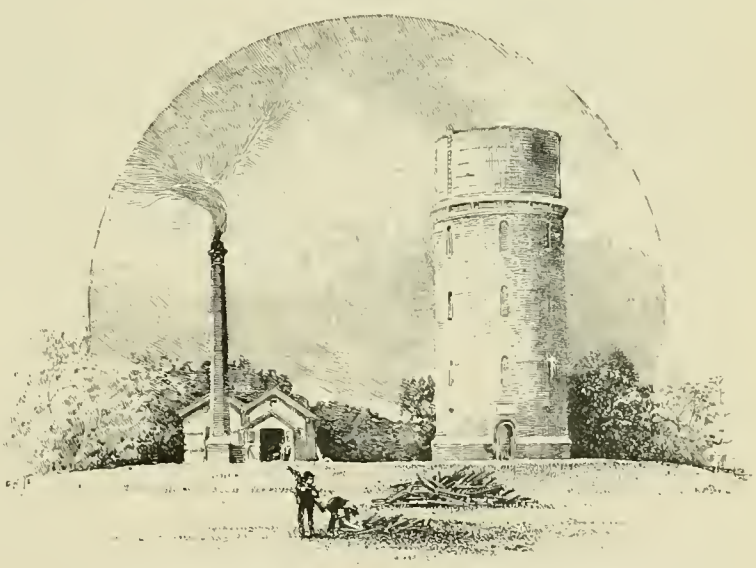
NEW SUPREME COURT, DENILIQUIN.

For there are towns dotted over these vast plains—little towns, it is true, for one of the largest—Deniliquin—only contains 2,500 inhabitants, and many miles apart, but still sufficient to bring civilisation into the waste. Wherever there is a river, there must needs be a crossing; and wherever there is a crossing, a little hamlet has sprung into existence. Such was the origin of Deniliquin, Hay, Balranald, Jerilderie, and a host of still smaller towns, whose inhabitants, the story runs, pray, not "Lord, give us our daily bread," but "Lord, send us our daily stranger;" for, literally, these towns live by the traffic, and were it to cease they would soon be deserted. Deniliquin, as we have said, is one of the largest of these towns, and is situated on the River Edward, the most important ana-branch or billabong of the Murray, for it leaves the main stream and flows on for 150 miles before returning to it, near its junction with the Murrumbidgee, increased in volume by having received, while on its separate course, the waters of a branch from that river. In a country where rivers of any sort are scarce, the Edward takes a high rank; for, above all things, it is permanent: the hottest summer sun does not dry up its current. It is a typical Australian river, winding a circuitous course through the soft sandy soil, bounded on either side by belts of trees, chiefly the ugly and ragged box, with an occasional dingy she-oak; for though there are no trees on the plains, the rivers and creeks have always plenty growing on their banks; and the "river-belt," as the band of timber is called, can be seen for miles winding its dark length like some huge snake across the plains.

Deniliquin is a straggling country town, older by far than many a city of Victoria, and bearing, consequently, many signs of antiquity, as antiquity is counted in Australia; for it must not be forgotten that as late as 1820 Oxley was giving it as his opinion that the western rivers he had discovered, and the immense level plains by which they were surrounded, were utterly useless both for pastoral and agricultural purposes, and declaring that the chances of their being re-visited were most remote. Oxley judged from the embarrassing superfluity of water, which stopped him at every turn, little thinking that future colonists would only complain of the want of it; for though the

soil round Deniliquin is fairly good, agriculture is out of the question, as the rainfall seldom exceeds eighteen inches annually, and, as often as not, that is inconsiderate enough to come all at once. The town itself straggles along both sides of the river, though the principal and business portion is to the south. It is easy enough to trace its growth. First, a mere crossing-place with a punt and a man to work it. Then gradually, since stock going north or coming south must needs all meet at the same place, a little township grew into being, to supply the humble wants of the stock-drivers. At first there would only be a blacksmith's, a butcher's shop, a public-house, and a general store. By slow degrees the town grew. In 1866 its population numbered 600 souls, which in twenty years' time became 2,500—quite a grand stride for such an out-of-the-way place. A splendid bridge took the place of the old punt; and in 1876 a private company opened a railway from Echuca, nearly fifty miles to the south, and the old stock-crossing was recognised as one of the most important towns of the Riverina.

Of the town itself there is not much to be said. Older than many of the mining towns which far out-rival it, its history, unlike theirs, has been quiet and uneventful. Nothing has disturbed the even tenor of its way—neither convicts, nor blacks, nor rowdy diggers. The streets, as a rule, are quiet and deserted. The principal one follows the course of the river, and consequently is not quite as straight as it might be; while the others cross it at right angles, and soon come to an end in the open plains. The houses and shops, as a rule, are dotted along these streets with an irregularity and an absence of unity which would hardly be tolerated in a larger city, but which here, somehow, seems very much in keeping with the sleepy old town. Rigid straight lines, smoothly-paved streets, verandahs all of one width, and houses of uniform height may be appropriate for bustling commercial cities; but in the old pastoral town one feels instinctively that these things would be out of place. There is nothing spick and span—nothing suggestive of newness—about Deniliquin. The very court-house, begun and left in an unfinished and uninhabitable state, presumably for want of funds (or can it be that crime has decreased to such an extent that it is now useless?) some years ago, has fallen into the fashion of the place, and bids fair to



WATER-TOWER AND WORKS, DENILIQUIN.

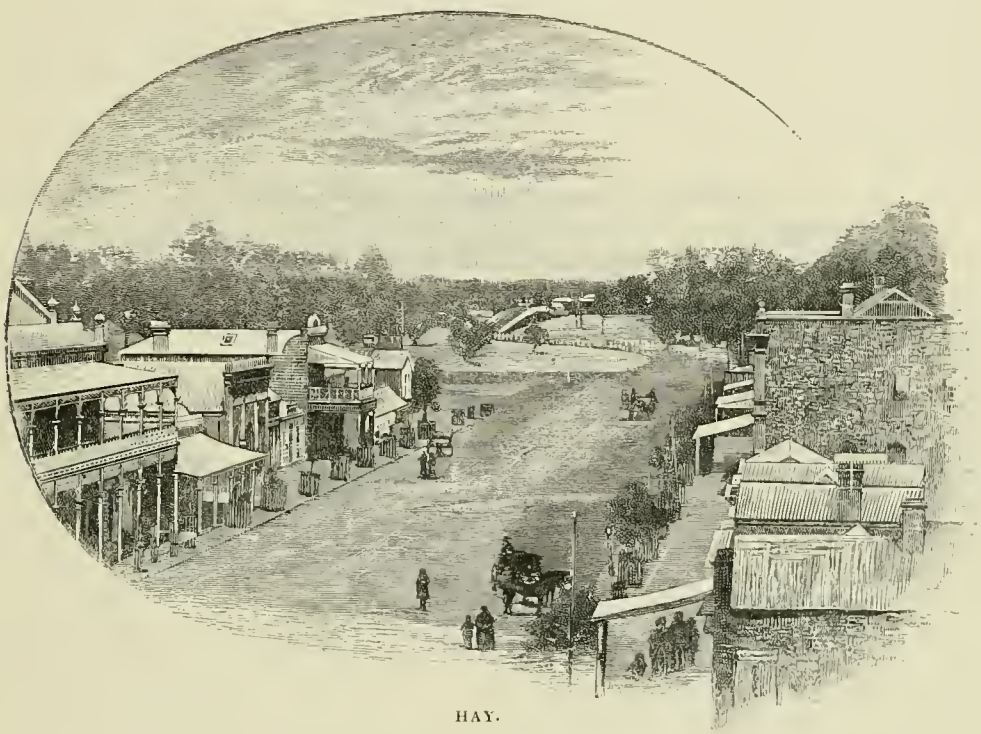
become a venerable ruin before ever it has been used at all. Most of the houses are of one storey, generally rambling cottages with deep verandahs; and the two-storeyed buildings might be counted on the fingers of the hand. The town-hall, overshadowed by the drooping branch of a pepper-tree, is a convenient red-brick building, with a high tower, from the top of which is to be had a splendid view of the surrounding plains, with the dark river-belt creeping across them.

That there are no paved streets, and very few even with kerbstones, goes without saying; for in all the country, from the Murray to the Murrumbidgee, and beyond that again far north of the Lachlan, there is not to be found so much as a solitary pebble; and even the roads, where they are made at all, are usually of broken bricks burnt for the purpose. Here and there, too, some attempt has been made to use bricks as pavement in the streets, but it hardly seems to have been a success. The streets are everywhere dotted with pepper-trees, looking at a little distance, with their vivid green colouring and drooping branches, not unlike weeping willows. The town councillors, indeed, have shown a wise discretion in restricting their street adornment to this one tree, and though it comes, we believe, originally from South America, a tree more suited to the dry and waterless plains of the Riverina could hardly have been found. It thrives in the scorching summers, and, despite want of water, and a burning sun which raises the thermometer to 160°, the pepper-tree looks fresh and cool, with a vivid greenness which, although it is an evergreen, almost out-rivals the willow. Transplant it to a cooler climate, where the rainfall is plentiful, and the tree, if it grows at all, presents a ragged, dingy appearance, strongly suggesting that it is dying for want of water.

Next to their bridge (which is, of course, their *raison d'être*), the thing of which the good folk of Deniliquin are justly proud is their water-tower. This is a high brick tower, on the banks of the river, a little to the east of the town, on the top of which is a huge tank. Into this tank the water of the river is pumped by powerful engines, and from it is laid on to the town, thus enabling every townsman to indulge in that morning tub which is so dear to the heart of the Englishman—dearer still, perhaps, to that of his Australian cousin; and great indeed is the consternation and dismay among the community when it is rumoured, as it occasionally is, that "there is something wrong with the engines, and there will be no water for two or three days."

What becomes of the town drainage is a thought that naturally strikes the newcomer, looking at the flat surface of the country round him; and it is a question that is not so easily answered as one might expect. Vague rumour—and it is only vaguest rumour—declares that it finds its way into a lagoon, a backwater or billabong of the Edward, and through that back once more into the river a little below the town—the townsfolk probably comforting themselves with the reflection that there is really no other township of importance on the Edward; and, even if there were, the river would be clear again long before its waters reached it. Still, luckily, considering the flatness of the land, drainage is hardly a matter of such great importance in Riverina as in moister climates. Here the extreme dryness of the air and the hot sun soon rid the place of all offensive matter, and neither decaying vegetable nor animal matter is

harmful or objectionable for long, for, if these are not sufficient, the north wind, which not unfrequently sweeps across the plains, bears away on its fierce hot breath all impurities, and more materially helps to keep the towns of the low-lying Riverina free from pestilence than the most approved system of drainage the brain of man ever devised. They are not pleasant, though, these health-giving hot winds, for they usually come accompanied by thick clouds of red dust—so dense that you cannot see across the street; so penetrating that spite of fast-closed doors and windows, it is impossible to



HAY.

keep the houses free from it. Hence the hot winds are much abused by the inhabitants of Riverina, who fail to recognise their importance, and certainly regard them as anything but blessings.

The lagoon which is said to receive the small amount of Deniliquin drainage is surrounded by a large piece of reserved ground, fenced and carefully planted with trees and flowers, while rustic bridges and summer-houses add to its charms, and make the Reserve a pretty and pleasant spot, spite of those rumoured drains. Though the lagoon *par excellence*, it is not by any means the only one, for everywhere the river shows characteristics common to all the rivers of the plains, and spreads itself out in the wet season in numerous little billabongs and lagoons, only some few of which however, are permanent.

It is curious that, with the river so close, boating is not one of the chief amusements at Deniliquin; but there are few boats, and still fewer people ever go on

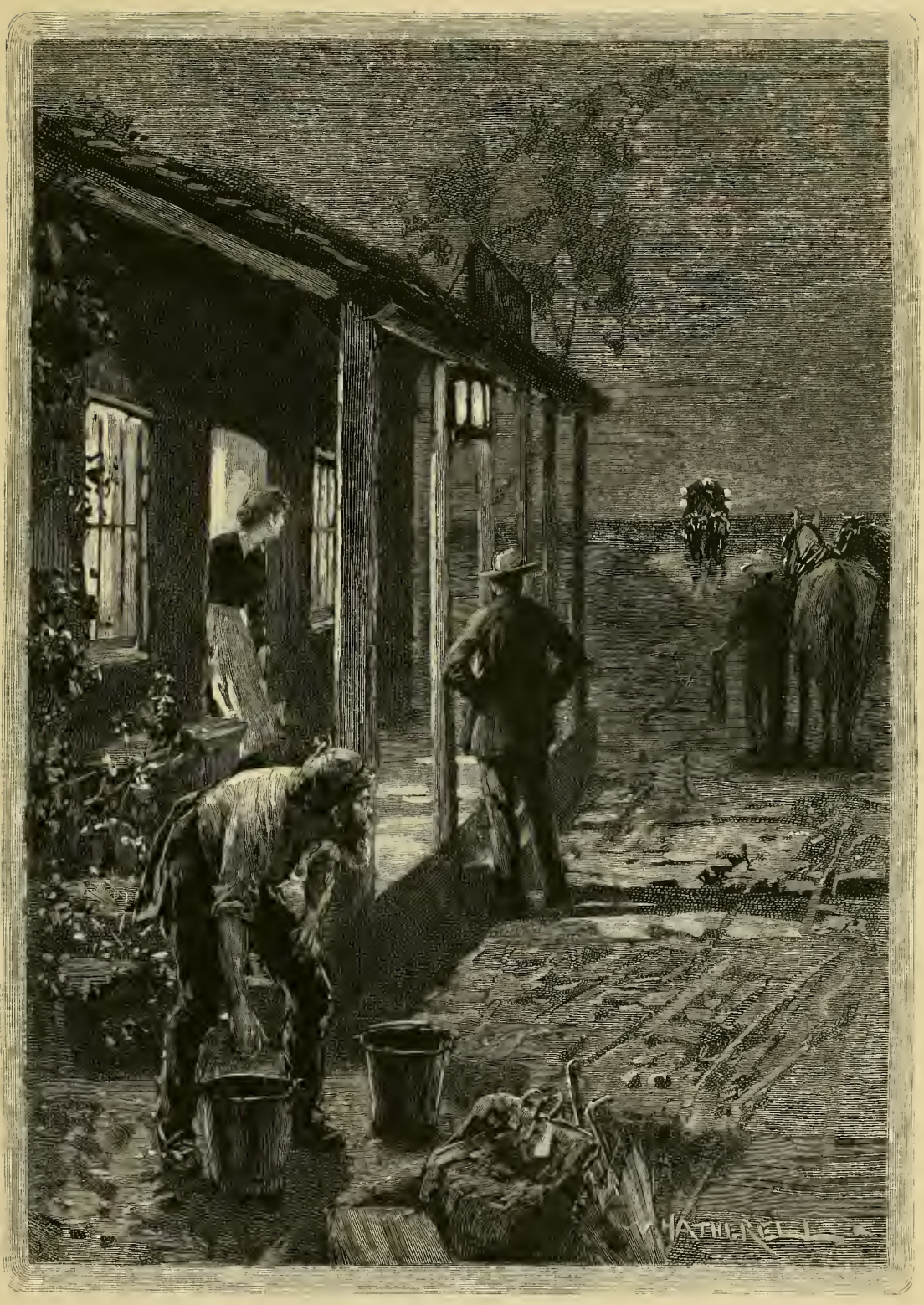
the water. About September the fishing season begins, and then Murray cod are fairly plentiful. These fish, if taken from the running water, and not from the muddy lagoons, are very palatable; and one fish is, as a rule, ample reward for the angler, for they weigh generally from seven to seventy and one hundred pounds, while even monsters that turn the scale at two hundred pounds are not unknown. The disciple of Isaak Walton certainly requires some little encouragement, for the mosquitoes down by the river are so numerous, so aggressive, and so voracious that life is only bearable to the most enthusiastic and devoted of fishermen.

The streets of Deniliquin, as we have said, are usually quiet even to wearisomeness. Occasionally a bullock-team toils patiently down the road, dragging some squatter's clip bound for Victoria, or stores for his station far out on the plains. Now the little mail-coach from Balranald or Jerilderie dashes up to the post-office with as much bustle and importance as if it were built to carry twenty or thirty people instead of six. A covered waggon, driven by a Chinaman, comes lumbering through the street; his household goods are behind him; his white wife, arrayed in a cotton gown and a sun-bonnet, is at his side; while the yellow faces of their numerous progeny peep over their shoulders and through the cracks and rents in the waggon-cover. John, too, is bound for some station out on the plains where he will be employed as a rabbiter. He is a well-to-do man, and probably has a snug little account at the bank, for the Chinaman has established himself as firmly in these towns far inland as on the coast. At Deniliquin is a Chinese camp on a small scale, and the Chinamen pursue their avocations as market-gardeners and rag-pickers.

About five o'clock in the afternoon the sleepy old town begins to show more signs of life, for the event of the day now takes place, namely, the arrival of the evening train from Melbourne. Then, apparently, the greater part of the population may be seen wending their way to the railway station, there to assemble on the platform to gaze upon the iron monster as if they had never seen a railway train before, and feared they might never have the chance again.

Once a year, however, the town wakes from its lethargy in real earnest, and holds high revel. This is in the middle of July, the depth of winter, though the term winter hardly conveys the right impression. Then are held the races and the sheep show, and from all the stations and towns around, with that blissful disregard of distance which characterises the Australian squatter, strangers pour into the town, till it is full to overflowing. The tradespeople reap their annual harvest from the pleasure-seekers, and the hotels are full; bar, passages, billiard-room, and dining-room—every corner that can hold a lodger who is not particular as to his personal comfort for a day or two is pressed into the service.

For a week the town is given over to pleasure; and balls, races, and picnics are the order of the day. The sheep show brings in squatters from the farthest back blocks on the Darling, and for one whole week the streets are full, busy, and bustling; then the strangers return to their distant homes, carnival week is over, and Deniliquin drops to its normal state of quiet.

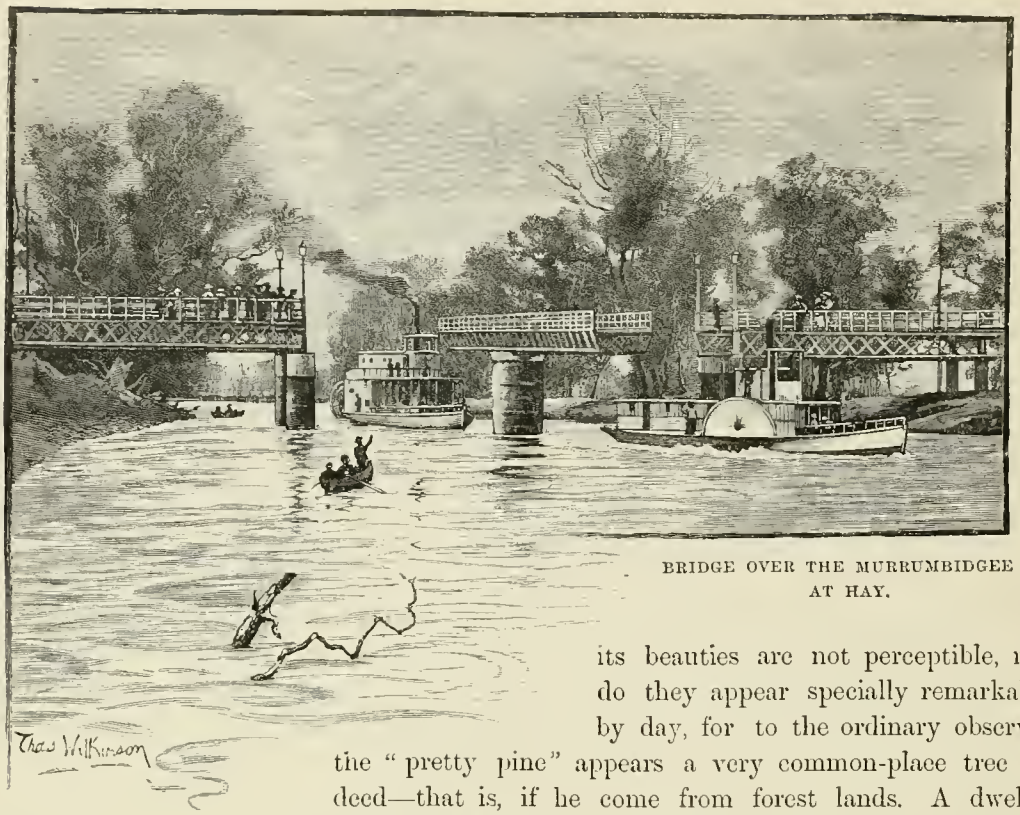


THE HAY COACH: A NIGHT HALT.

After the arrival of the Melbourne train, the next daily event of any importance in Deniliquin is the setting-out of the Hay coach, which six nights out of the seven crosses the eighty miles of plain that lie between this town and Hay. Punctually every evening at seven o'clock the coach, with its five horses, leaves the "Royal Hotel," stops for one moment at the post-office for Her Majesty's mails, and then dashes on again (sometimes crowded with passengers and luggage, sometimes with but the driver and another man) down the road, across the bridge, and out on the trackless plains, to travel there all night till the morning's dawn shall bring into sight the river-belt of the Murrumbidgee, on the other side of which is Hay.

Road on the plains there is none; the stock-route is over a mile wide, and the crisp salt-bush crackles beneath the horses' hoofs as they swing along at an even, steady pace, the heavy coach swinging on its leather springs backwards and forwards with a troublous, uncomfortable motion, strongly calculated to produce sea-sickness in the uninitiated. It is a weary journey. One mile of plain by day is remarkably like another, and by night there is nothing to mark the passing of the hours and to break the monotony save the stoppages for fresh horses, which are changed every ten or twelve miles. There is something weird and strange in the notion of receiving one's mails and almost all the news of the outside world at dead of night, as the inhabitants of these lonely public-houses, miles distant from other habitations, do. By day an occasional drover, riding slowly behind his flocks, or a traveller who prefers to journey by day, are their only visitors; but regularly as clockwork every night come the coaches. A sound of wheels is heard from the distance, and the whole household is alert and ready; fresh horses stand waiting, the door is open, and a ruddy light streams out, the landlord stands hospitably in the glow, and the one or two women the shanty contains peep round the door-post or fidget over the table roughly laid for tea—for is not the event of the day, or rather night, about to take place? The sound of wheels comes nearer and is plainly heard on the dry, still air, the five great lamps are visible, and then the lumbering form of the heavy coach itself looms out on the darkness. The steaming horses stop suddenly in the lamp-light, and willing hands rush forward to unhitch them, the driver never relinquishing the reins till every strap and buckle is free. Then perhaps, if he is in a condescending mood (for the driver of Cobb's coach is an important personage on the road), he steps down from his lofty perch, strolls carelessly through the open door, warms himself before the glowing fire (for the nights in winter are often chilly on the plains), retails gossip in an affable manner to the admiring women-folk, patronises the obsequious landlord, deigns perhaps to partake of a cup of tea or a little "something hot," takes charge of a letter, and then—time is up—the great man strolls out again, climbs to his perch once more, gathers the reins in his skilful hands, gives a few directions to the lanky stable-helps standing round open-mouthed and envious—a shout of "All aboard," a crack of the whip, and the coach is off again for another ten-mile stage.

These little stopping-places on the plains all bear a strong family resemblance to one another. At "Pretty Pine," the first after leaving Deniliquin, there is a native pine-tree carefully fenced, from which the little inn takes its name. By night, of course,



BRIDGE OVER THE MURRUMBIDGEE AT HAY.

its beauties are not perceptible, nor do they appear specially remarkable by day, for to the ordinary observer the "pretty pine" appears a very common-place tree indeed—that is, if he come from forest lands. A dweller on the plains would probably be more lenient in his judgment. Wonganilla, on the Billabong Creek, the next stopping-place, is the only place between Deniliquin and Hay that can even be dignified by the name of hamlet. Here there are two public-houses, a store, and a blacksmith's shop; but, spite of this magnificence, the Pine Ridge, or Booroorban, as it is but seldom called, thirty miles from Hay, is the principal stopping-place. Here the coaches stay nearly half an hour, and passengers and driver of the Hay coach make a late supper, while those from Deniliquin have an exceedingly early breakfast—somewhere about three o'clock in the morning. There is no such levelling process as coach-travelling. No one, of course—not even the Governor of the Colony—could object to sitting down to supper with the driver; an ordinary individual feels it rather an honour than otherwise. He is far the most important personage for miles round. There is no second class—all must pay the same (and pay highly, too) for the privilege of riding in the coach, and all alike must sit at the same table, partake of the same fare, use the same black-handled knives, and drink from the same coarse white cups—be it dainty, fastidious Englishman, just fresh from the comforts of the Old Land, or lean, yellow Chinaman going to join his "cousin" somewhere out on the plains far beyond Hay.

Between Wonganilla and Pine Ridge the event of the journey ought to take place, for at "Trotting Cob" resides an Australian ghost. Every night, at twelve of the clock, a ghastly figure (its bloody head under its arm) may be seen trotting slowly

round the little inn, mounted on a snow-white cobby horse. It is not on record that any of the passengers by the mail-coach have as yet seen this figure. That the ghost is there is, of course, an undoubted fact—for has not the place been named after it? And the driver, if he be in a communicative mood, will tell a long story of the cruel wrong and murder which led to the place being haunted. Unfortunately, it is out of our power to give the true story of this most authentic ghost, for it varies with the different drivers (sometimes even with the moods of the same driver), and, consequently, the history of "Trotting Cob" is lost in the mist of many journeys to and fro and much whisky and water.

After leaving Pine Ridge the coach crosses a portion of the Old Man Plain. It is well on in the small hours now, and the interest with which the passengers began their journey has given way to an overpowering desire for sleep. Perhaps this is as well, for here are no points of interest whatever. Wonderfully silent have they all become. Inside some are dozing in various uncomfortable attitudes. One has betaken himself to the boot, and is sleeping the sleep of the just in somewhat uneasy fashion on the mail-bags and luggage, while on the roof already more than one man has nodded so perceptibly that the driver feels constrained to call out a solemn warning that "only last week a gent as fell asleep on top of the coach fell off, and was picked up a stiff'

"THE LITTLE STEAMERS COME UP FAR BEYOND THE TOWN."

'un." Very slowly the time seems to pass, and to every anxious question as to where we are now comes the same laconic answer, "Old Man Plain;" but at length the Sixteen Mile Gums are reached, the last stage is begun, morning dawns in the east, and there before the eyes of the travellers lies the dark winding river-belt of the Murrumbidgee bounding the horizon to the north, and the coach has very nearly reached its destination. Sleepily the passengers rouse themselves and compare notes, the driver puts on an extra spurt, the coach thunders across the bridge, dashes up

the street (wakening with its clatter the sleepy town), and finally draws up at Cobb's Coach Office.

Hay in all its features remarkably resembles Deniliquin, and the description of the one town would do almost equally well for the other. And yet there are radical points of difference. Deniliquin, the terminus of the Victorian Railway, is essentially a Victorian town, having Melbourne for its capital, while Hay, on the other hand, belongs entirely to its own colony, is the terminus of its railway, and owns Sydney for its capital. Here, too, dwells the Anglican bishop, who, though he be Bishop of Riverina, makes Hay his headquarters; and, greatest difference of all, while Deniliquin is on the decline (or, at least, at a standstill), Hay, though as yet its population is but little over 2,000, is a rising town, destined, its people declare, to be the future capital of Riverina. The little town is due north of Melbourne, and a line drawn from Sydney to Adelaide not only passes through it, but is nearly bisected by it. It is situated in one of the most picturesque bends of the unpicturesque Murrumbidgee, and is a neat, tidy little place. Its streets are wide, and planted with trees—quaint currajongs, a species of eucalyptus (very like in form to the stiff wooden trees we have all played with in childish days); bright green pepper-trees, with their coral berries; and graceful grevilleas, which in the spring are gorgeous with orange-coloured blossoms, and promise to add greatly to the beauty of the town when they shall have grown to their full size in the years to come.

Hay nestles close to the river, hugging the waterside, while the railway station is half a mile away, surrounded by the bare blocks and pegged-out streets of the surveyed town, which as yet but few people have settled upon. There are some two-storeyed buildings in the town, but generally, as in Deniliquin, the houses are seldom more than one storey high, are built in cottage form with broad verandahs, and are usually set in the midst of gardens—hardly trim English gardens (labour is too expensive and water too scarce for that), but pretty gardens, nevertheless, full of semi-tropical plants and fruits that require the warm sun of Riverina to bring them to perfection. The streets are lighted by gas, and so are most of the public buildings, but as yet it is so expensive that but few private persons indulge in the luxury. Water, as in Deniliquin, is pumped into a high water-tower (in this case an iron one), and is thence laid on to the town. The river here is navigable in the spring and early summer, when the snows have melted on the far-distant ranges where the Murrumbidgee has its sources; and the little steamers come up far beyond the town, carrying stores to the distant stations out on the plains, and returning again with the squatters' clip in closely-packed bales before the river has fallen to its summer level. The traffic on the river is always a source of excitement for the Hay people, a diversion which Deniliquin lacks, for the Edward is not navigable, being far too full of snags (fallen trees) and sandbanks. At Hay the state of the river is a constant topic of conversation. It is very low, it is rising, it is running a banker, and then the first steamer of the season has made her appearance—a little steamer, whose cabins and deck-houses apparently make her somewhat top-heavy, with a big paddle-wheel in the stern, and behind her she tows three or four barges destined

to carry the wool. Eagerly is she watched as she comes puffing and panting to the long bridge, which seems at first to present an impassable barrier, but as she approaches the whole of the centre is swung slowly out on a pivot until it stands lengthwise in mid-stream, and there is ample room for her to pass on either side. Her crew consists of three or four men—namely, the skipper, his mate, and perhaps two deck-hands, who may be seen lounging over the railing, idly scanning the view as they pass.

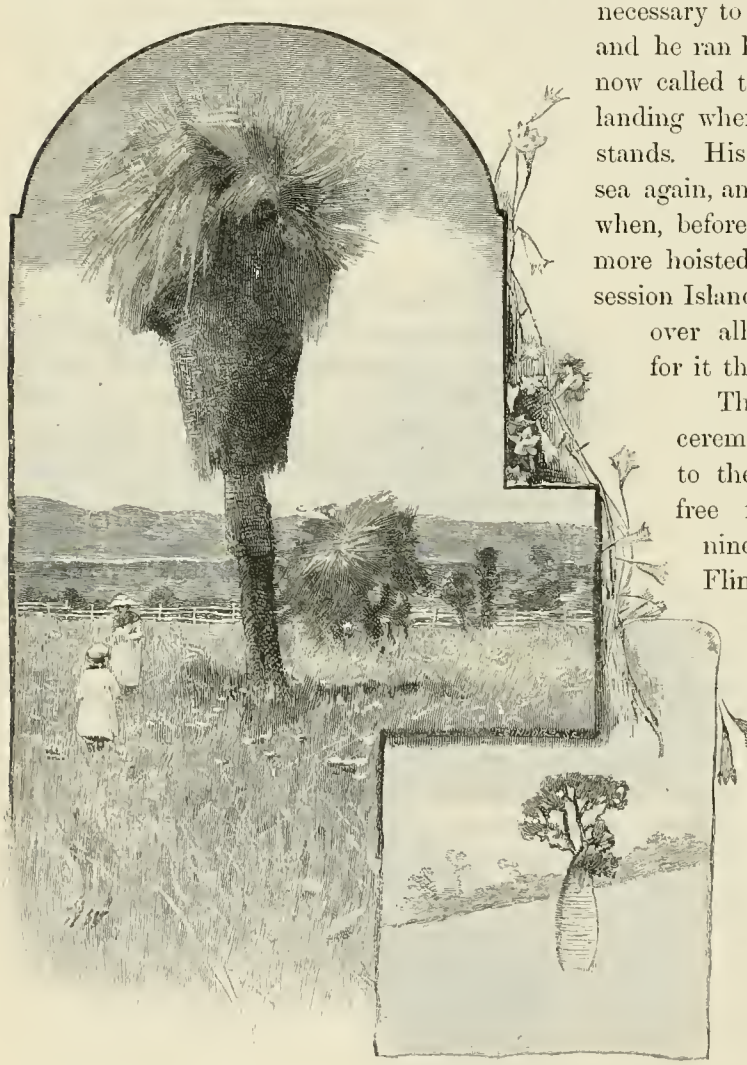
A river-sailor's life can scarcely be counted a hard one. As long as the river is high enough its navigation presents little difficulty, and at night almost invariably—always, in fact, unless the moonlight is very brilliant—the little steamer is drawn close to the bank and firmly held there by a rope thrown round the nearest tree-trunk. Twenty years ago, when very few railways were open, the river-steamers were extensively used by passengers, especially by women and children, who dreaded, not unnaturally, the long and weary coach-journeys. In point of time, of course, the steamer took longer, for one hundred miles by river may mean but three by land; and this, with the nightly stoppages, made a journey in a cramped and crowded vessel one not to be lightly undertaken, more especially as the provisions were humble, not to say coarse, while the cookery was of an exceedingly primitive order.

Seldom—we might almost say never—do passengers travel by steamer now. The coach is generally preferred, even to reach the towns on the Darling in the far west, and the steamers, owing probably to the uncertain state of the rivers, are wholly given up to carrying cargo. There is no doubt that they carry an immense quantity of goods, principally station stores—flour and tea, kerosene and tobacco, blankets and leather, and, above all, pain-killer. The amount of this medicament consumed "out back" must be enormous. The bushman regards it as a sovereign remedy—the panacea which, whether applied outwardly or inwardly, cures all the ills that flesh is heir to. Far out, too, where, when the whisky has run out it is impossible to procure either that or any other stimulant at a moment's notice, there will sometimes come over a man a longing and craving for strong drink, which he appeases as best he may, and he will even toss off kerosene and water with great gusto. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that pain-killer, spite of its fiery nature, or perhaps on account of it, ranks high as a stimulating drink. The story is told out on the back blocks of a traveller who, arriving at a wayside shanty where they were out of liquor, called for a nobbler. He was promptly presented with a glass of pain-killer and water. "Surely," said he wonderingly, sipping at the milky-white liquid—"surely it's pain-killer." "Shut up, you fool," cried the landlord, holding up a warning finger—"shut up! Why, man, they're drinking Farmer's Friend in the parlour." And, really, he should have been satisfied, for Farmer's Friend, seeing that it is only used for dressing wounds on horses and cattle, must be considered much lower down in the scale of drinks.

QUEENSLAND—PAST AND PRESENT.

Captain Cook's Visit—Explorations by Flinders, King, and Otley—Convictism—Separation—The Political Constitution—Discoveries of Gold—Copperfield—Tin Mining—Crops, Fruits, and Flowers—Zoology—Fisheries—Railways—Manufactures—Religion.

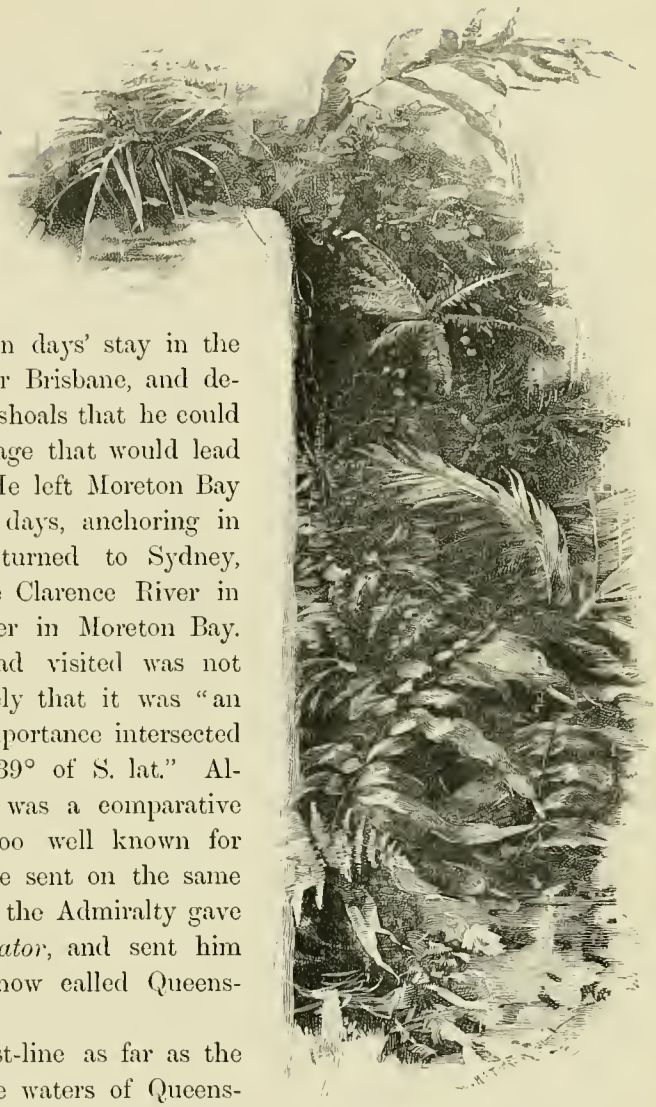
IT was on the 16th of May, 1770, that Captain Cook entered Moreton Bay in the *Endeavour* and from the topmast-head surveyed the long low line of country, and named it after his patron the Earl of Moreton, then President of the Royal Society. He continued his cruise up the coast, naming the principal heads and bays, until he ran his ship on a coral reef, and very narrowly escaped total shipwreck. It became necessary to beach the vessel for repairs, and he ran her into the mouth of a river now called the Endeavour, and made his landing where the town of Cooktown now stands. His repairs effected, he went to sea again, and sailed as far as Cape York, when, before retracing his steps, he once more hoisted British colours, and on Possession Island proclaimed George III. king over all the eastern coast, retaining for it the name of New South Wales.



GRASS AND BOTTLE TREES, QUEENSLAND.

The blacks who were by this ceremony dispossessed of all title to their lands, remained, however, free from intrusion for twenty-nine years, when Lieutenant Flinders, in the *Norfolk*, dropped anchor in Moreton Bay. Landing on Bribie Island, he attempted to parley with the aboriginals; but they were not amicable, and fighting ensued on the spot now called Skirmish Point. Lieutenant Flinders remained a fortnight in Moreton Bay. On climbing one of the heights he obtained an extensive view of the surrounding country, and counted many columns of

smoke, which showed him that he was in the neighbourhood of a large encampment of the natives. The blacks on the shores of the mainland showed themselves freely, and made friendly overtures, singing and dancing to attract attention. Lieutenant Flinders did not however attempt to land on the mainland, and during his fifteen days' stay in the bay he failed to discover the River Brisbane, and describes Moreton Bay as "so full of shoals that he could not attempt to point out any passage that would lead a ship into it without danger." He left Moreton Bay and continued his cruise for two days, anchoring in Hervey's Bay. After this he returned to Sydney, having missed the discovery of the Clarence River in Shoal Bay, and the Brisbane River in Moreton Bay. His report of the country he had visited was not favourable, and he averred positively that it was "an ascertained fact that no river of importance intersected the east coast between 24° and 39° of S. lat." Although this voyage of exploration was a comparative failure, Lieutenant Flinders was too well known for his pluck and intrepidity not to be sent on the same mission again; and two years later the Admiralty gave him the command of the *Investigator*, and sent him to examine the coast of what is now called Queensland.



QUEENSLAND FERNS

He sailed all round the coast-line as far as the Gulf of Carpentaria, and found the waters of Queensland studded with many beautiful islands. This coast has one distinctive feature exceedingly interesting to the geologist—the Great Barrier Reef.* This reef is of coral formation, and stretches for a distance of 1,200 miles, from Port Denison to Torres Straits. Doubtless it shows the point to which in remote ages the shores of the continent extended. Anyone glancing at a modern chart of the coast of Queensland will at once perceive the skill that was required to navigate this shore in the days when there were no trustworthy maps or correct charts; and it is to this voyage of Lieutenant Flinders that we owe the knowledge of the fact that the navigation of Torres Straits was "both practicable and easily made."

Lieutenant King, in the *Mermaid*, made a further survey of the coast in 1817,

* *Vide* Vol. II., p. 119ff.

and drew some charts which were of considerable value. Until now the vast tract of land was only known by its coast-line, and the next move in 1823 we owe, not to the desire of a generous nation to carry the torch of civilisation to enlighten the dark ways of barbarians, but to the necessity that this same great nation was in for finding a convenient outlet for its criminal population. Botany Bay had been a station for convicts since 1788, but it was already overcrowded; and as a prosperous colony grew up around what had at first been only a penal settlement, the population began to resent the idea of the dregs of society from the Old Country being sent to filter through their midst. Commissioner Bigge therefore recommended that a new station for convicts should be formed, and Sir Thomas Brisbane, then Governor of New South Wales, sent Lieutenant Oxley in the *Mermaid* to explore the coast and report upon any favourable point for a penal settlement. And so the mighty change that was to people a vast land with a new race crept on. A great human tide was rising—rising to beat on unknown shores; it had not receded, because as yet only a few waves had crept beyond the usual tide-mark. The great waters were banking up behind, and the end would be a change so vast and so important in the world's history that every detail of the first pioneers' early experience would become of deep interest. The hardships they endured, the pluck and energy they showed, are jewels in a national crown of glory; the mistakes they made, the outrages they committed, blots on that nation's escutcheon.

Lieutenant Oxley sailed northward as far as Bowen (the name being, of course, of much later date), and having discovered the River Bowen, he retraced his steps and returned to Moreton Bay. Here a lucky chance made him fall in with two white men, named Thomas Pamphlet and Finnegan, who were living on amicable terms with the natives. These men are generally supposed to have been runaway convicts, but their own story was that they were timber-getters: that their craft had been carried out to sea, drifted northward, and ultimately wrecked on Bribie Island; that the blacks treated them with great kindness; that it was easy at low water to pass from the island to the mainland; and that in their wanderings with the tribes they had seen a broad and deep river.

This was quite enough to make Lieutenant Oxley dream that the spot he was seeking was found. He at once formed a party for exploration, and, guided by the castaways, entered the mouth of the river on the 2nd of December, 1823. He pulled fifty miles up stream, examined its banks, and named it Brisbane, after the Governor of New South Wales. So enchanted was he with the success of his expedition that, under the impulse of his first enthusiasm, he wrote a rather exaggerated description of the river and its surroundings. The authorities at Sydney were only too anxious to get rid of the convicts, and quite imagined that by forwarding them to Brisbane they were sending them to a bourne from which return was as impossible as we should consider it now from the North Pole. Thirty of the worst offenders were singled out and shipped on to the brig *Amity*, Lieutenant Oxley in command, and under the guard of a detachment of the 40th Regiment, commanded by Lieutenant Miller, they were landed at Humpybong, and began the first settlement of Queensland. The place

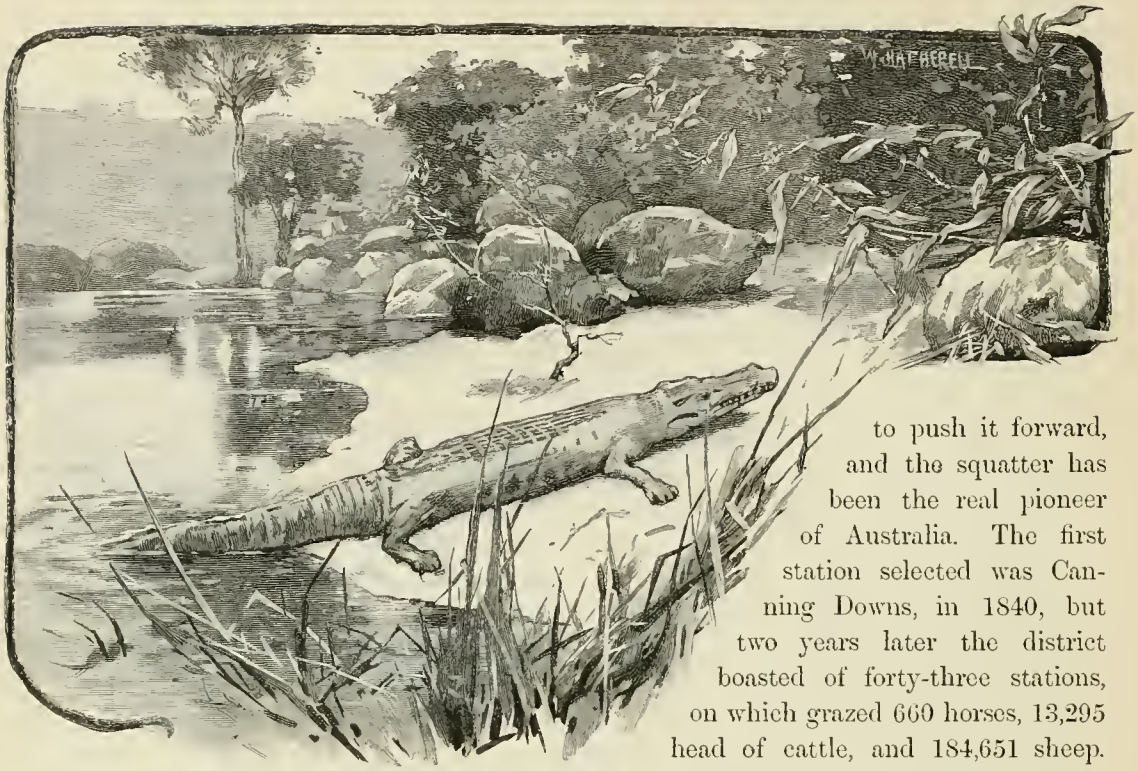
was not, however, well chosen, and the following year the settlement was moved to Eagle Farm, close to the present site of Brisbane. Another batch of the most desperate characters from Botany Bay added to this hopeful start, and before four years had passed, one thousand convicts, guarded by one hundred soldiers, had landed in Moreton Bay. Far-seeing and wise indeed would that man have been who in those dark days could have prophesied that from that beginning would rise a colony which the Mother Country would be proud to call her offspring; that the few straggling barracks and houses for the commandant and officers would be replaced by a city in which culture and refinement, industry and trade, should flourish, and that the walls which held pinioned the worst of malefactors would one day receive an assembly of the representatives of a free and enterprising people.

It is sad for human nature to have to pause here to speak of the cruelty and the crime which stained these first years of the new colony, but it would not be fair to pass the matter over in silence, and, whilst deploring it, we must recollect that from the seething and fermenting vat flows the pure, clear, invigorating wine.

From 1824 to 1840 eight commandants ruled the penal settlement Captain Logan, who commanded between 1825-30, was murdered at his post. The crime was laid to the door of the blacks, but many people believe that it was a conspiracy of the convicts. The commandants were allowed the exercise of unlimited power. Far from the possibility of any help or support in case of emergency, and with a very slender force in their hands, it was not wonderful if they maintained discipline with a harshness which verged upon cruelty, and even transgressed its bounds.

Gradually the colony of New South Wales had passed out of infancy, and was asserting its manhood. It had begun to think for itself, to work out its own interests, and to realise that side by side with duty to its parent were growing up separate duties to itself. The first step was to banish the convicts to a distant part of its own dominions; the next (in February, 1840) to pass "an Act to abolish transportation of female convicts, and to provide for the more effectual punishment of offenders." It was not, however, until the year 1853 that England at last passed the Bill which formally cancelled transportation, and admitted that the Mother Country "had no right to force convicts on the colonies against the will of the latter." Although the transportation of criminals to Moreton Bay ceased in 1839, it was not until May 4th, 1842, that the district was thrown open to settlement. In December of the same year the first sale of town-land took place at Sydney, thirteen acres realising £4,637.

Until now, although the coast-line had been explored, of the interior nothing whatever was known, and the boldest surmise could never have ventured to forecast the vast riches which have since been disclosed. Already the great pastoral industry had been started, for the penal settlement owned flocks and herds. These in 1839, when the settlement was broken up, numbered 900 head of cattle and 4,500 sheep; and, as no buyer was forthcoming, the Government continued to graze them on the Ipswich and Redbank stations. Four years later the cattle had increased to 1,620 head, the sheep to 12,000. In this year the wool of this flock was sold at 1s. per pound, and fetched £1,000. An industry yielding such returns was not likely to need men of enterprise



AN ALLIGATOR POOL IN NORTHERN QUEENSLAND.

to push it forward, and the squatter has been the real pioneer of Australia. The first station selected was Canning Downs, in 1840, but two years later the district boasted of forty-three stations, on which grazed 660 horses, 13,295 head of cattle, and 184,651 sheep. The population numbered 335, of whom 45 were ticket-of-leave men.

As the discovery of printing marks an epoch in European history, so in modern times does the establishment of a newspaper mark an epoch in the advancement of a young community, and the morning of the 20th of June, 1846, which first saw the establishment of the *Moreton Bay Courier*, now known as the *Brisbane Courier*, accentuates more than anything the rapid strides with which the young colony had advanced. But though a few years had brought about so vast a change, it was still only a little corner of Queensland that was settled, and only the extreme fringe of its garment that had been touched.

Passing by the harrowing yet stirring story of the exploration of the interior, of which some account will be found elsewhere, we may point out that, even before convictism was abolished, great dissatisfaction existed in the unwieldy province of New South Wales. The progress of the north was being terribly retarded by the want of labour, and the squatters in the northern districts complained that the fair share of labour in the market did not find its way up to them. The New South Wales Government made several abortive attempts to meet this grievance, and the *Artemisia*, with 240 immigrants on board, was sent to Moreton Bay. But the remedy, though rightly chosen, was insufficiently applied, and the cry for labour was only heard the louder. In 1849 Dr. Lang, one of the most able and energetic spirits of the new settlement, inaugurated a scheme for the introduction of free labour, and the *Fortitude*, the *Chasley*, and the *Lima* all landed immigrants in accordance with the provisions of this scheme: but still the tension was

not removed. Meanwhile towns of importance were springing up on every side, and, with Brisbane at their head, declared that their material interests were being overlooked; that the seat of government at Sydney was too far removed from their centre; and that business was being delayed and advancement kept back. The discontent grew; every class had its special grievance and its own remedial scheme, until one single word in a despatch from Earl Grey united all the discontent into one focus, and divided the north from the south as if it were one man. The word which proved of such vast import was—Separation. To the would-be seceders it seemed full of life and hope, and they embraced it eagerly, and rallied round it with noisy acclamation; to the south it seemed like the cry of dissolution—a dismemberment that was only next door to extinction; and they fought against it with all their might, and for several years successfully prevented it.

Earl Grey's famous despatch was dated in 1848. During more than ten years the separationists, with Dr. Lang at their head, fought for their independence, which the Imperial Government at last granted in 1859. On the 10th of December in that year Sir George Bowen, the Governor of the new colony, landed at Brisbane, and general rejoicing celebrated the birth of Queensland. Dr. Lang received the thanks of the Legislative Assembly, and was rewarded for his exertions by seeing the new colony advance by rapid strides. In our own day once more the magical cry of separation is raised, and the north of Queensland aspires to the title of Albertland.

The political constitution of Queensland is the same as that of the older colonies. The Governor represents the Queen, and is appointed by the Crown. There are two Houses of Parliament, corresponding to the two Houses of the Mother Country. The Legislative Assembly is elected for five years, and consists of fifty-nine members. The Legislative Council, appointed by the Governor-in-Council, has thirty-six life-members. The Assembly is elected by the people, and every man not convicted of crime

SOME QUEENSLAND FLOWERS.

and resident for six months in the same place is entitled to vote. The members of the Assembly since 1885 have had their expenses paid. The Bill to provide for this was the subject of a severe conflict between the two houses, and was passed in the face of the most strenuous opposition from the Legislative Council.

In 1858 (the year before the separation of Queensland from New South Wales) gold was found at Canoona, thirty miles from Rockhampton, and now the Queensland goldfields are accounted amongst the richest in the world. Even the disastrous rush on Canoona* was of ultimate benefit to the colony, for here was a large country rich in pasture-land and valuable mines, with a soil full of endless possibilities, and a climate to which a hardy race could easily adapt themselves. All these riches were lying fallow for want of brains to search them out and hands to work them. Of the thousands who rushed to Canoona, many remained in the colony, and settled either in the steady round of agricultural pursuits, or (fired by the restless energy of the gold-seeker) began to turn over the soil of the new colony in search for the precious metal.

Some years passed before any fresh discoveries were made, then in quick succession the goldfields of Gympie, Charters Towers, the Palmer, the Etheridge, and many others were discovered. In 1883 there were fifteen goldfields being worked, forming a total of 7,793 square miles. Every year since then has been pregnant with fresh discoveries, chief amongst them the wonderful Mount Morgan, near Rockhampton, which has been described as a solid hill of gold, and has certainly furnished the most extraordinarily rich returns. The total yield of gold for the colony during the year 1885 amounts to 310,941 ounces; the number of miners employed the same year 4,743, and 1,015 Chinamen. Every miner is forced by law to provide himself with a yearly licence, for which 10s. is charged. A business licence costs £4. A Chinaman pays £3 for a miner's right, and £10 for a business licence. The discoverer of a goldfield receives a bonus from the Government of from £200 to £1,000, according to the number of hands the goldfield proves able to support.

Every goldfield is deemed new for three years after its proclamation. During these three years no mining right can be bought by an Asiatic or African alien, though an equitable law provides that, should the field be discovered by an alien, the prohibition is cancelled. The object of this clause is to exclude the Chinaman from reaping the first-fruits of any discovery. Wonderfully industrious and frugal, never spending, always hoarding, the Chinaman's good qualities cause him to be abhorred by the white population. Earning more than a subsistence by washing the alluvial dirt which has already passed through the hands of the white man and been thrown on one side as useless, caring nothing for the country he is dwelling in, during life his spirit lives in China, and at death his body is transported thither; so that the white man toiling by his side looks upon him as a blood-sucker, withdrawing everything, and giving nothing in exchange. Year by year the Chinese population increases in Queensland; the poll-tax apparently does nothing to check the incoming stream. They are the best gardeners, and pretty well the whole of the market-gardening of the colony

* *Vide* Vol. II., pp. 30, 31.

is done by them. As cooks they command as high wages as the white man, and therefore, from their numbers and their usefulness, they become the white man's powerful competitors, and threaten at no very distant date to lower the rate of wages current in the colony. In 1883 the Chinese in Queensland numbered 12,668, of whom only forty-nine were females.

Beside gold, rich mines of copper, tin, coal, silver, and lead are found in Queensland. Sapphires, diamonds, agates, and rubies have been found in the creeks running into the Gilbert River, valuable opals at Cloncurry, and fine pearls in the sea. Antimony is found at Neardie; galena lode and bismuth ore near Gilberton; manganese at Gladstone. Iron is met with in large quantities, and a bonus of £5,000 is offered for the first five hundred tons of good marketable iron from ores raised and smelted in Queensland.

Only the surface of all these treasures is touched as yet, and none can forecast the wealth they will yield. Capital is needed and labour is needed, but year by year, as the boundless possibilities of the country attract the eyes of the world, its mineral productiveness must increase. Of the copper mines, the chief are at Cloncurry (said to be the "premier mineral-producing locality of Australasia, if not of the world"), at Mount Perry, and at Copperfield; but at present, owing to the low price of copper, the capital needed for the development of the mines is not forthcoming, and this industry is not prospering.

Copperfield may, indeed, be called "the deserted village" of Queensland. Here all used to be activity, and now silence reigns. The ruin and desolation of a place which once supported two thousand souls strikes the visitor with sadness. In the Old World we see the ruins of races which have preceded us, and they strike us with awe; in the New World at times we witness the ruins of our own generation, and they awaken our sympathy. Here are rows of houses without inhabitants; shuttered windows and boards falling to decay. The largest smelting-works in the colony raise their great chimneys to the sky, but no smoke rises through them now. At one time thirteen shafts were being worked, and twenty-five furnaces were in full blast; now all is silent and desolate—a monument of disaster.

Of tin the supply seems exhaustless, but there is a deficiency of capital to prospect the lodes, and the fields are worked without method or economy. The coal deposits must not be passed over with the bare mention of their existence, for they have in all human probability a great future before them. Mr. Tenison Woods, an eminent geologist, regards the coal resources of Queensland as enormous, and believes that her shores will prove to be the great emporium of the Southern Hemisphere. At present the supply of house-fuel is mainly drawn from the great forests or scrubs with which the whole of Queensland is covered, but Mr. Woods' report on the coal-beds states: "It may be added, the coal has been extensively used for steam and gas purposes, and testimonials are before me from a large number of masters and engineers of steam-vessels, all speaking highly of the fuel, and some preferring it to any other." Darling Downs show a hard coal with a fine percentage of paraffin, and this opening will doubtless some day be worked.

The sugar industry has received a severe check of late; bad seasons, low prices, and, above all, the labour difficulty, have combined to check advance. Since the withdrawal of the bonus on cotton, the cultivation of that plant has not been much pushed forward. Maize, wheat, lucerne, tobacco, and arrowroot are amongst the many crops which can be grown at a profit in Queensland, and two crops of maize and potatoes may be garnered in the twelve months.

The great extent of territory producing immense variation of climate, causes Queensland to exhibit the curious feature of the same country producing the crops and fruits of both tropical and temperate zones. Pine-apples, oranges, and bananas grow along

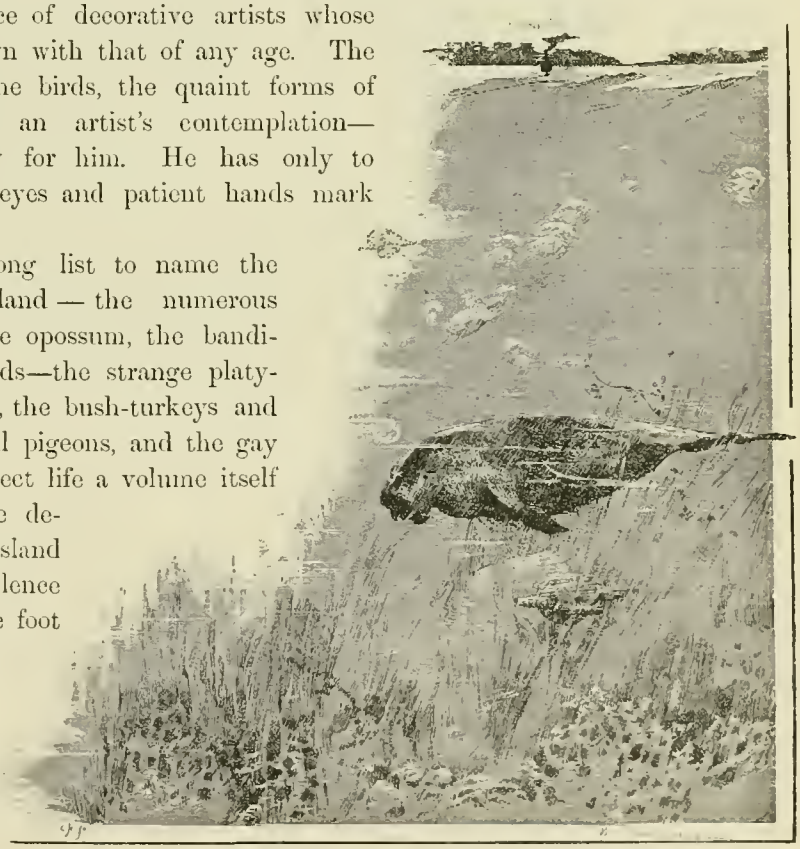
PINE-APPLE GARDEN, QUEENSLAND.

the coast, whilst peaches, grapes, and figs flourish far inland, and are raised with success in the face of the terrible droughts which from time to time pinch the life out of everything. The indigenous plants of Queensland are various and beautiful, from the great trees of the forest—the cedar, the pine, the iron-bark, the bloodwood, and the gum-trees—down to the delicate grasses and the tender wild-flowers. Along the banks of the coast-rivers many beautiful kinds of ferns are found. The varieties of flowering shrubs are endless, from the graceful wattles to the tender mimosa.

Neither is Queensland destitute of indigenous fruits; the Davidsonia plum, the Herbert River cherry (the stone of which has the originality to cling outside instead of inside the fruit), the native kamquat, the native limes, are all worthy of notice. The bunya-bunya pine, a noble tree bearing a cone as large as a man's head, grows in the scrubs between the Brisbane and Burnet Rivers. The seeds contained in the cones are

very much esteemed by the aborigines. The Government have proclaimed a large reserve in the district in which the tree grows best, and in this reserve no white man can either fell a tree or eat the fruit. The flowers of Queensland, with some few exceptions, are not richly scented, neither is the dry air calculated to draw out the fragrance that exists, but tenderness of colouring, and grace of foliage, and weird eccentricity of form can be seen in a Queensland scrub as in no other spot in all the world. The rosy glow of dawn, the blue, cloudless sky of midday, the primrose of evening—each infuses a different life into the vegetation, and prevents monotony. The clearness of the atmosphere gives a strange distinctness to Queensland scenery, and the eye, accustomed to the rich luxuriant mystery of English oak or beech, has to unlearn something as it gazes upwards into an iron-bark, and marks the hard, dark stems, and each clearly-defined leaf with its silver shadows, or sees the leaves of the box-tree shimmer in sunlight, painted like mirrors to catch the sunbeams, or watches the delicate pale-green brigalow lift its stiff leaves and yellow stalks against the azure sky. Standing on the ground, you feel as if you could count every leaf, so clearly does each stand out apart from its brother. The old missal-painters knew something of the charm of this distinct outline, which, if it were less perfect in its beauty, might be hard; they felt it and seized upon it in countries where it barely exists, and Queensland ought to produce a race of decorative artists whose work should hold its own with that of any age. The gorgeous plumage of the birds, the quaint forms of the quadrupeds, invite an artist's contemplation—everything seems ready for him. He has only to arise, and with loving eyes and patient hands mark what he sees.

It would take a long list to name the quadrupeds of Queensland — the numerous varieties of kangaroo, the opossum, the bandicoot, the dingo; in birds—the strange platypus, the handsome emu, the bush-turkeys and eagle-hawks, the beautiful pigeons, and the gay parrot tribes; but of insect life a volume itself would barely contain the description—for the Queensland climate and the great silence of a continent where the foot of man has hardly trodden are so propitious to the increase of animal and insect existence, that the wonder is, not that they exist in



A DUGONG.

great numbers, but that there should be any traces of extinct species. The destruction of marsupials and dingoes costs the colony annually a very large sum, and the dread of the multiplication of rabbits is so great that in the session of 1885 it was enacted that "any person might destroy any rabbit found alive in any part of the colony; that any person turning a rabbit loose, or suffering it to run loose, was liable to a penalty of £10 to £50 for the first offence, and for the second offence £20 to £100." In the same session was also voted a large sum for the erection of a rabbit-proof fence at the boundary of the colony, in the hope that any incursion from New South Wales might in this way be checked. In spite of these precautions the rabbits are now in Queensland. Of snakes, over sixty kinds have been counted, and five are poisonous. The seas and rivers contain, amongst other fish, whales, seals, dugongs, turtles, but abound in sharks and alligators.

In the north two great fisheries claim our attention, the pearl-shell and the bêche-de-mer. The pearl fishery is one of the most important industries of the colony. The live shell is valued at £130 per ton, and the pearls found inside are often of large size and beautiful colouring, although the irregularity of their surface detracts from their market value. South Sea Islanders and Malays are generally employed as divers to bring up the shells, but some diving-dresses are in use now. To the much-abused Chinaman we owe the existence of the bêche-de-mer fishery, which, according to a late return, employs 206 boats and 1,500 men of all races. The bêche-de-mer is a kind of slug, resembling a cucumber in shape. It is exceedingly numerous, and lies at the bottom of the sea. Its colouring is gloriously beautiful; it is the flower of the deep-sea bottom; but none but the diver's eye can enjoy this wonderful garden. The bêche-de-mer is caught and dried, and sold to the Chinese for soup. It fetches, according to its quality, from £40 to £90 a ton.

The railways of Queensland belong to the Government, and every year sees their extension. The telegraph lines have pierced into the most unsettled districts, and in the large towns the telephone is in use. Of course there are vast tracts of country sparsely settled where the railway has not yet penetrated, but a good system of coaches connects these districts, and gives the European traveller a pleasant savour of a leap backwards into a past century. The bush-roads are not the smallest part of the piquant treat of coach travelling. The deep ruts cut by teams travelling with heavy loads of wool or stores are regular pitfalls. The banks of the gullies and creeks are steep and stony, and few have bridges. In flood-time they are dangerous in the extreme. The country is for the most part flat, but over the ranges the descents are precipitous, even neck-breaking, and the roads often mere tracks. In dry weather the sand smothers the traveller with dust, in wet weather the black soil becomes an impassable bog.

The list of manufactures is already a long one, and they are largely on the increase. A few amongst them must be mentioned, in order to give the reader an idea of the rapidity with which the colony is advancing. The preservation of meat for exportation, boiling down, and tanneries, are amongst the most important. Soap and candles are made, good tweeds are woven, and there are large factories for boots

and shoes. Carriages, waggons, and railway carriages are built. There are seventeen yards for ship and boat building, and steamers are both constructed and repaired. The printing houses number fifty-six.

At the time of separation from New South Wales the State of Queensland relinquished all control over the Church, and, except that the ministers who celebrate marriages have to be registered, they are entirely disconnected from the State, and all denomina-

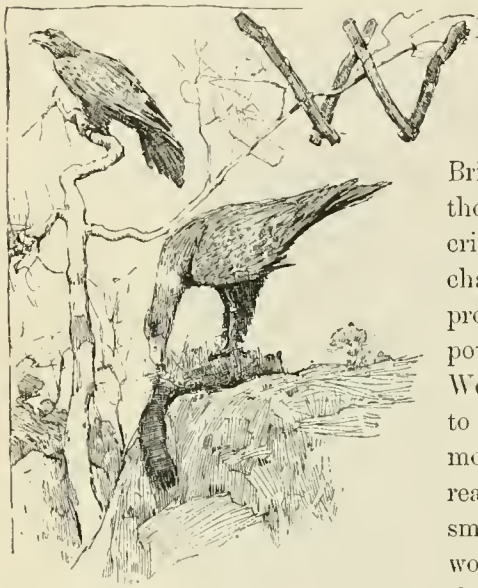
GIGANTIC FIG-TREE NEAR SOUTHPORT.

tions are upon a footing of equality. All denominations have their churches and chapels, the Jews their synagogues, the Chinamen their joss-house.

We have now made a hasty survey of a colony which would contain England more than thirteen times over. We have seen the great invading wave of white faces creep slowly up and sweep over the land, changing it in every direction. The old things are fast passing away, the black faces have become fewer and are dying out, the strange kangaroo is beaten back into the interior, and the gorgeous birds have hidden themselves in the thickest scrub. It is not all gain to see the peace and silence of nature chased away by the rush of the settler and the noisy activity of the steam engine.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA: ITS PEOPLE AND PRODUCTS.

The Great Evil—"Larrikinism"—The Natives—Their Dress and Customs—Opossum Hunting—Their Dances—The Climate—The Soil and its Productions—The Pearl Fisheries—Animal Life—Birds and their Songs—Reptiles and Insects—Fish.



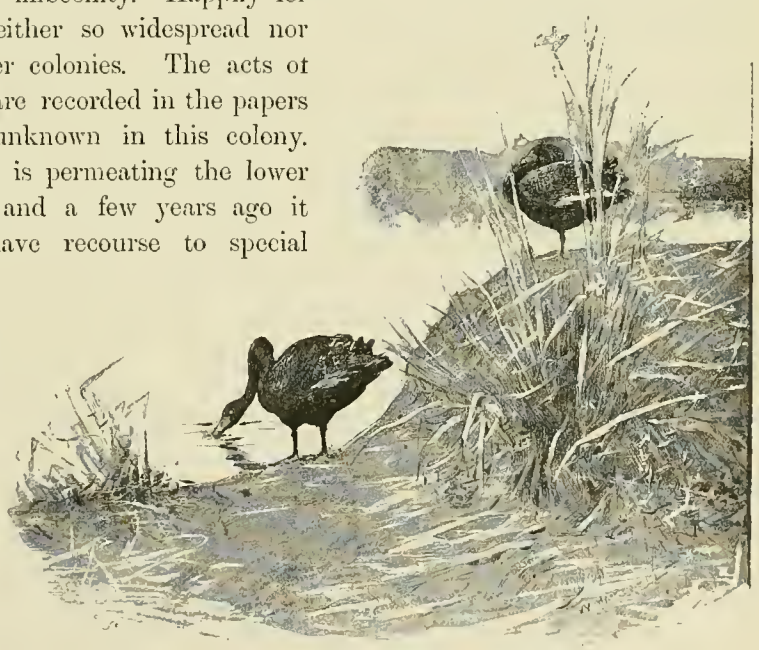
WEDGE-TAILED EAGLES.

WITHOUT claiming for the forty thousand souls, or thereabouts, who comprise the population of Western Australia, a state of morality superior to that found in other portions of the British Empire, it may fairly be said that none of those parts can exhibit annals less disfigured with crime. As a rule, the people bear an excellent character for probity and industry, and no better proof of this can be given than the fact that poverty, as it exists elsewhere, is unknown in Western Australia. The poorest family has enough to live on, although the fare may be of the commonest description, and the poor-houses are, in reality, merely institutions for the reception of a small number of aged, infirm, and invalid men and women, who have no relatives capable of supporting them. The great evil of the colony is undoubtedly drunkenness, although that has been much exaggerated. The worst phase of drunkenness is to be found in the habits of the shepherds and bushmen. These men generally live at some distance from the inhabited parts of the districts — in the wilds of the bush — frequently fifty miles or more from the nearest public-house. They seldom see a human face, except upon such occasions as the visits of their masters, or the teams with rations, or when the nomadic aboriginal wanders that way in search of game, either in the shape of kangaroo or the "white-fellow's" nalgo (food) when the said "white-fellow's" back is turned. In this semi-barbarous solitude they continue for periods varying from six months to a couple of years, and not infrequently even longer. After twelve or eighteen months (perhaps two years) thus spent, an irresistible longing for the scenes and habits of civilisation seizes the bushman, who takes the first opportunity of leaving the station in charge of some other shepherd, and of drawing from his master the wages which have been accumulating during his spell in the bush. Supplied with an order on the storekeeper with whom the sheep or stock-owner has credit, he visits the nearest town, presents his order, purchases a suit of clothes and whatever trumperies he desires, and then, armed with the balance of the order in the shape of a cheque, he betakes himself to a public-house. Arrived there, he hands his cheque to Boniface, and proceeds to "lamb down" its amount, and the public-house loafers

indulge in the luxury of a several days' "drunk," until either the value of the cheque is spent, or, as has frequently been the case, the cupidity of the landlord has caused him to place an unfair limit on the number of the "lamber-down's" drinks and "shouts" (treats). Tales verging upon the fabulous have been related of the "lambing-down" process. Men have entered the public-house of a sparsely-populated hamlet and disbursed a hundred pounds in two or three days. A man has been known to spend fifty pounds —at any rate, he was said to have spent it—treating himself and a score of other bibulous individuals to "rounds" of brandy or beer.

Of late years this system of swindling has prevailed to a less extent than formerly, as also has the heavy drinking which was once carried on at some of the public-houses. In days gone by the thirsty souls purchased five or ten gallons of whisky at a time in buckets, and helped themselves to it by the pannikin-full, ladling it (neat) down their callous throats. It is not surprising that the words which left their mouths were as sulphureus as the drink which entered them was fiery. In those days a man has been known to purchase a hogshead of beer, and set it up on a stand in his hut, and then to lie with his mouth under the tap, and remain there through the hot summer days and nights until he had drunk the entire quantity of it. But these are events of a nearly forgotten past, when police supervision was scanty. Nowadays it is everywhere established, and is in most places sufficient to exercise a wholesome restraint upon intemperance. The laws dealing with the sale of intoxicants are likewise very strict, and local option in a modified form has been conceded to the community.

"Larrikinism," as youthful rowdyism is designated in Australia, is the union of the extremes of brutality and imbecility. Happily for Western Australia, it is neither so widespread nor pronounced as in the other colonies. The acts of coarse, brutal crime which are recorded in the papers of "the other side" are unknown in this colony. At the same time, the evil is permeating the lower classes to a large extent, and a few years ago it was found necessary to have recourse to special legislation in order to restrain its growth. The "Larrikin Act," as it is popularly called, has done good wholesome work. Having before their eyes the growth of the evil in the other provinces, the magistrates carry out the law with rigorous impartiality and justice.



HOME OF THE BLACK SWAN.

But after all that has

been said under these heads, the broad fact remains that the people of the colony are eminently law-abiding. Crime is very rare. Besides this, they justly enjoy an excellent character for their hospitality to strangers; and although they are perhaps at first rather cautious in making new acquaintances, the new arrival has no cause to complain of his treatment. Unfortunately, immigrants sometimes expect too much. In a colony only recently emerged from a very primitive state of civilisation, they expect to find most, if not all, of the conveniences and the sources of recreation with which they were familiar in other lands. And during the past few years some of the familiar evidences of civilisation elsewhere have made their appearance in the colony, and assisted in the development of that go-ahead spirit in the people which, in the towns at any rate, will provide all the conveniences and amusements which are now recognised as part and parcel of modern existence.

In that delightful accumulation of mendacity alleged by the Gallic Defoe to be the narrative of his hero, the French Robinson Crusoe, Jacques Sadeur, we find some excellent lies about the inhabitants of his Terra Incognita Australis. They were androgyns of lofty stature, being eight feet high, and in colour approximated the true red. Their clothing was even more scanty than the traditional fig-leaf, and they were fond of manly exercises, and included war amongst their many diversions. Communistic principles governed their political and social relations towards each other, from necessity; as, "if it should happen that any one of them had anything that was not common, 'twould be impossible for him to make use of it." Their system of religion and philosophy was enlightened, and, as might naturally be supposed, peculiar to themselves; and they were far advanced in the arts and sciences—particularly, as to the former, in painting, sculpture, and architecture.

It is a pity that such a picture is false, and that the savages of Australia are as unlike Sadeur's aboriginals as the real Indian is unlike the noble red man of Fenimore Cooper. Such intellectual anakim would, despite their attachment to war, have been a vast improvement upon the degraded specimens of our race who, for the most part, constitute the aborigines of "Oceana." The aborigines of Western Australia, belong probably to the same race as those of the eastern half of the continent, for there is a family resemblance in colour, language, customs, and laws. It has justly been remarked by a local writer that, "measured by the English standard of taste, they are a very ugly race; and the women are, perhaps, more unprepossessing in appearance than the men." He thinks, however—and occasionally one is tempted to agree with him—that a well-formed Australian native may lay claim to consideration in respect of muscular development, agility and flexibility of body, and manly bearing. Such instances of "well-formed" natives—at all events, in the south—are, however, as rare as the "black swan" was once supposed to be.

The difference in mode of life between the natives in the north and those in the south is considerable. The southern native lives in a hut, sleeps on a bed of leaves or rushes, and wears a booka, or covering formed of kangaroo or opossum skins; the northern native lodges in the open air, sleeps on the ground in summer, and in the winter excavates a hole in the ground in which

he deposits himself. As a rule, he is a much finer specimen of humanity than his southern brother, and not a few of the women approach very nearly to the "good-looking." He disdains (unlike the aboriginal of the south) the use of clothing, being girt only round the loins with a fragmentary covering. Some curious tales have been told of their induction into the garb of civilisation. I once heard of a native gentleman of fierce aspect who industriously got together a collection of miscellaneous clothing, and placed it for safe keeping and admiring inspection on his body. When seen by my informant, his head was bedecked with a child's hood, the upper half of his body with a waistcoat, his nether limbs with a crimson shirt, the sleeves covering his legs. Over that he wore a girl's frock, which, however, he held high enough to exhibit the Wellington and Blucher boots which encased his feet. In addition, he wore in his nose a long piece of bone, and was understood to be a "Cœlebs in search of a wife."

In the unsettled parts superstition is very rife. Broken up into small tribes, the natives are always at enmity with each other, and believe that sickness and death are the results of their foes' malignant influence. In revenge for their comrades' deaths, they inflict severe reprisals on whatever tribe they hold responsible for the calamity. So far as has been learned, they have no idea of a future state, but they have a belief in spirits. The chief of them are (in the south) Jengy and Wangul. The first is a terrific creature—a real bogey, with fiery eyes and a mouth breathing flame, who lives away in the mountains, and comes forth at night, or lurks about in quiet places in the day-time, to seize and devour men. Wangul is a water-spirit, and preys more particularly on women, especially the young ones who go down to the rivers to bathe. The Rev. C. G. Nicolay says, in his "Handbook of Western Australia," that "each family has its kobong or cognisance, some animal or vegetable for which they have a superstitious reverence, and which is, therefore, not used as food by the family who adopt it." In the more northern parts some tribes, it is said, believe that the white men are the spirits of the dead blacks. It is to this belief that Tennyson alludes in a recent poem.

"E'en the black Australian dying hopes he shall return a white."

Familiarity with the presence of the black man's spirit, however, breeds not only contempt for, and unbelief in, his supposed supernatural powers, but a covetousness after his worldly possessions.

When not employed by the whites, the men generally lead a lazy life. Occasionally they do a little kangaroo or opossum hunting, but, as a rule, it is the women who supply the commissariat, by digging up edible roots, catching fish, snaring birds, gathering eggs, or treeing opossums. This last performance is worthy of description. Both the men and the women adopt the same method, the former always undertaking the task when the tree is high. "Womanee fall, p'raps killum self," explained a sable hunter; but it was self-interest rather than care for his "coujal" (wife) which prompted his consideration for her safety, since he did not wish to lose his commissary. Having discovered a tree bearing 'possum signs (*i.e.*, slight indentations of the marsupial's claws in the bark), the native throws off all clothing likely to impede her

movements, and with a tomahawk cuts a small nick the size of a hen's egg in the bark, about two feet from the ground. She makes a similar nick higher up, and inserting the fingers of her left hand in that, and the big toe of her left foot in the lower one, she raises herself from the ground and cuts another nick midway between those two, in which she puts her right big toe. That raises her sufficiently to enable her to cut another high nick, which she holds with her right hand, having first put her tomahawk in her waist-belt in front. She then repeats the operation with her left hand, and continues it from right to left, and left to right, until by means of her strange step-ladder she reaches the branch where the opossum lies *perdu*. Having ascertained by tapping it how far the limb is hollow, she cuts a hole into it, draws her quarry out by the tail, and stuns him with a smart blow against the limb. She then throws him to the ground, and descends the tree by the same way as she ascended it. It looks much more dangerous than it really is, and, given daring and ordinary strength of limb and muscle, a white man, after a little practice, can accomplish the feat as easily as a black. But in the settled districts the natives prefer 'possum-hunting with a gun when the little creature comes out o' nights to feed among the tree-tops.

The woman is no better than the slave of her "man." Besides keeping the larder supplied, she is hut-builder, beast of burden, personal attendant, and general factotum for her lord and master. Polygamy is practised amongst the natives, but the number of wives for one man rarely exceeds three. In some parts of the colony, particularly to the north-east, the women are betrothed when they are mere toddling children (mostly to the old men), and when they reach the age of eleven or twelve years they enter upon their wifely duties. The tribal laws affecting marriage and inheritance are very peculiar. The children are regarded as the mother's and not the father's, and take her family name. Intermarriage between members of one family is contrary to their laws. Not only the actual offender against any of their laws, but his relatives are liable to be punished for his crime. The Mosaic law which compelled a man to marry his brother's widow and adopt his children prevails among some tribes, but the property goes to the male children only. The inheritance consists of the right to certain hunting-grounds, and such rights are always jealously guarded.

The natives are much given to singing and dancing, and their corroborees and war-dances are spectacles to be remembered. Many years ago a corroboree was got up by the natives in honour of Governor Wild when he landed in Albany. It took place at night, a short distance out of town, and nearly everybody turned out to witness the sight. Around a fire, as large as four or five ordinary bonfires, were grouped some three hundred natives, male and female, "dressed," as a wag put it, "in various stages of nudity." Their faces and breasts were marked with white, red, and yellow nilgie—an unsavoury compound of prepared clay and stale grease, and on their heads they wore emu feathers and other ornaments. Many of them had small bones or sandal-wood sticks thrust through the cartilages of their noses. They carried gidjies (spears), wommeras (throwing-sticks), kyleys (the Western Australian boomerang), dowarks (something like the Hibernian shillelagh), wannas (staves), and other implements and weapons. Round the fire squatted a number of men and women with kyleys in

each hand, and at a given signal they struck up a wild funereal dirge, accompanying it with a clattering of the kyleys together, sounding like a band of loose-jointed, festive skeletons dancing to the melody of the songful bull-frog. While they were thus engaged, the men and women who had been standing in a circle round the fire

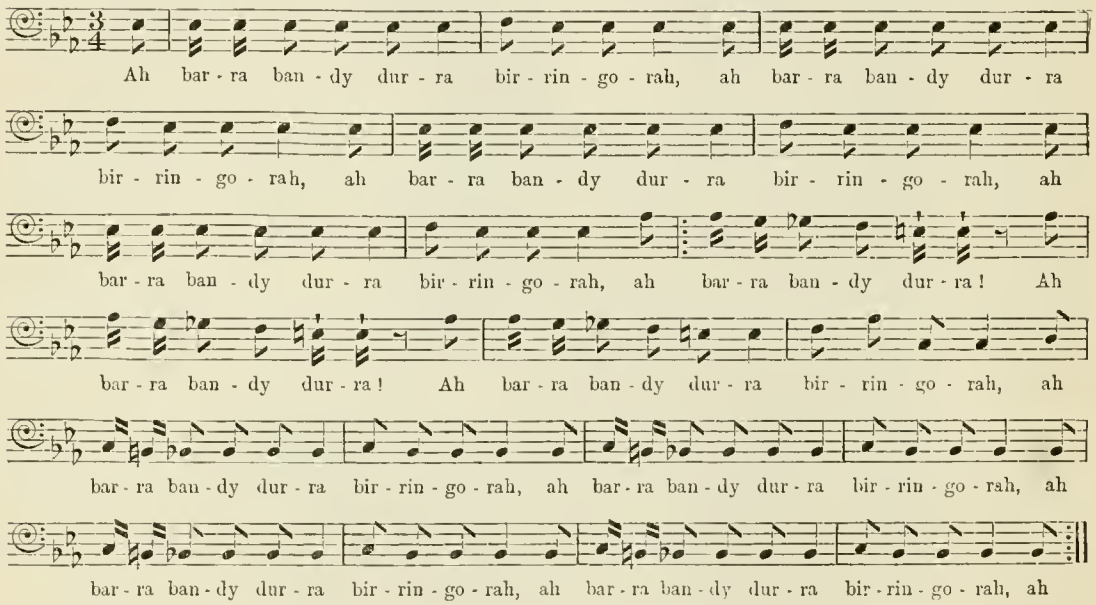
OPOSSUM HUNTING.

stamped with their feet; and while the women supplied a screeching treble, the men grunted out a monotonous and most unmusical guttural bass capable of expression only by the words "Ugh! ugh! ugh!"

After several minutes had been spent thus, the kyley-players stopped their music, and the men and the women, all singing together, performed a sort of combined quadrille, lancers, and Caledonians, and then resumed their former exercise. This was repeated in many ways, and varied with yells and shrieks and howls, and

with saltatory performances "between the acts," representing hunting and battle scenes, and after a couple of hours had passed, the affair wound up with a cancan. It was one of the strangest of many strange scenes I have witnessed in Western Australia, and it required but a slight stretch of fancy on the part of the beholder to imagine that a pack of fiends had broken loose from Pandemonium, and were holding high festival in the bush.

Some years later I witnessed the war-dance of some blacks from Nicol Bay, and managed to learn the song which accompanied it, although I have not the ghost of an idea what the words mean. The dance was a most expressive one, and the various motions—indicating the sighting an enemy, pursuing him, fighting him, and, it is needless to say, conquering him—were all faithfully exhibited in the strictest time to music. It was a very graceful bit of acting. And in order that the reader may have some idea of the aboriginal style of music, I venture to set down the air and words:—



To gain a fairly accurate idea of the melody of this beautiful composition, it is necessary, in singing it, to flatten it the eighth part of a tone, and to speak nasally rather than to sing the notes. As will be seen by the clef in which it is written, it is for male voices only.

The natives are employed in various capacities by the settlers, and some are of great service as shepherds, stock-riders, and trackers. They are employed in tracking as native police-constables. Amongst the women, especially those trained at Bishop Salvado's Roman Catholic Mission at New Norcia, good domestic servants may occasionally be found, who are clean in their habits, attentive to their duties, attached to their employers, and excessively kind to the children. But such instances are rare. As a rule, they are idle, dirty, ungrateful, and given to drink and to worse vices.

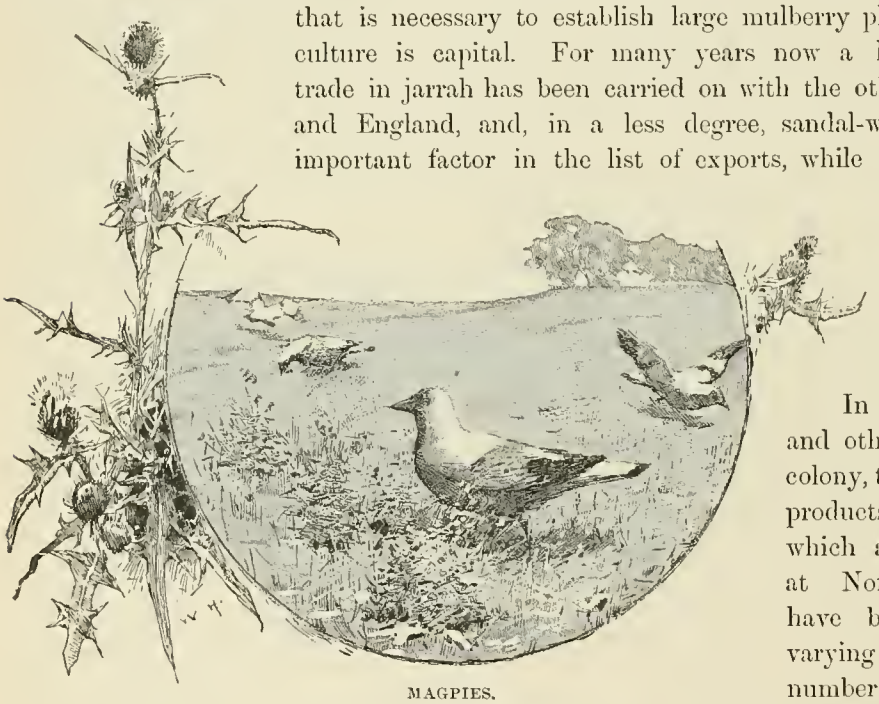
The only way of making them permanently useful members of the community is by training up the young children. Those who have enjoyed this advantage have almost invariably turned out well. To do this, however, to any extent, liberally-supported institutions are necessary, and up to the present time the colony has never been in a position to do as much as it desired to see done. But of late the native question has occupied more attention, both from the Government, the clergy, and the general public, and an Act has been passed which places them in a more favoured position than in any other Australian colony.

As to the climate of Western Australia, we cannot do better than quote the words of Sir Frederick Broome, the Governor of the Colony, who, speaking before the Royal Colonial Institute in 1885, declared it to be "the best and healthiest in the world." "I believe," he proceeded, "we are nearly right, judged by the very practical standard of a death-rate of fourteen per thousand. The climate of the greater part of the colony surpasses in health-giving excellence the most favoured spots in Southern Europe. Old age appears almost a matter of course. Nothing can exceed the charm of the light air, and bright sunny days may be counted on for nine or ten months of the year, with very occasional exceptions. The winter rains are neither bleak nor excessive, and a hot wind for a few hours now and then in summer is the only disagreeable feature."

From Shark's Bay to Perth the temperature gradually decreases, while the atmospheric conditions between that city and Albany leave little to be desired, and everywhere along the sea-board the summer heat is counteracted by a cool, refreshing sea-breeze from the southwards, which prevails during the greater part of every day. Such cold as prevails in England is unknown in Australia, and although the rains which fall are abundant, owing to the porous nature of the soil they are quickly absorbed, and there is comparatively little residual surface-water. Frosts occur occasionally, and early in the morning a thin sheet of ice sometimes forms in the pails and tubs. Snow is unknown to the native-born inhabitants, although a local writer some years ago stated that the aboriginals to the southward described the occurrence of a phenomenon which was probably a fall of snow. With regard to the winds, the same writer states: "Hurricanes never occur in the colony. In the winter season the north-west gales sometimes blow very heavily, but, as compared with other parts of the world, Western Australia enjoys a remarkable immunity from severe and destructive storms." Of late, however, that immunity has not been so marked. Heavy gales have raged along the seaboard with exceeding great violence, inflicting considerable damage upon property both on sea and land. Especially disastrous has been the influence of the "willy-willys," the local name for the hurricanes which periodically visit the north-west. With the exception of the "willy-willy," there is little to complain of as regards windy weather.

The soil varies much in quality—that adapted for agriculture, with the exception of the rich flats at the Greenough, lying in comparatively small patches. Small areas of arable land, some rich and loamy, others more or less sandy, occur between larger areas of rocky pasture, granitic or calcareous. Occasionally forests of timber are met with, and although, from a picturesque point of view, the luxuriantly-foliaged trees strikingly

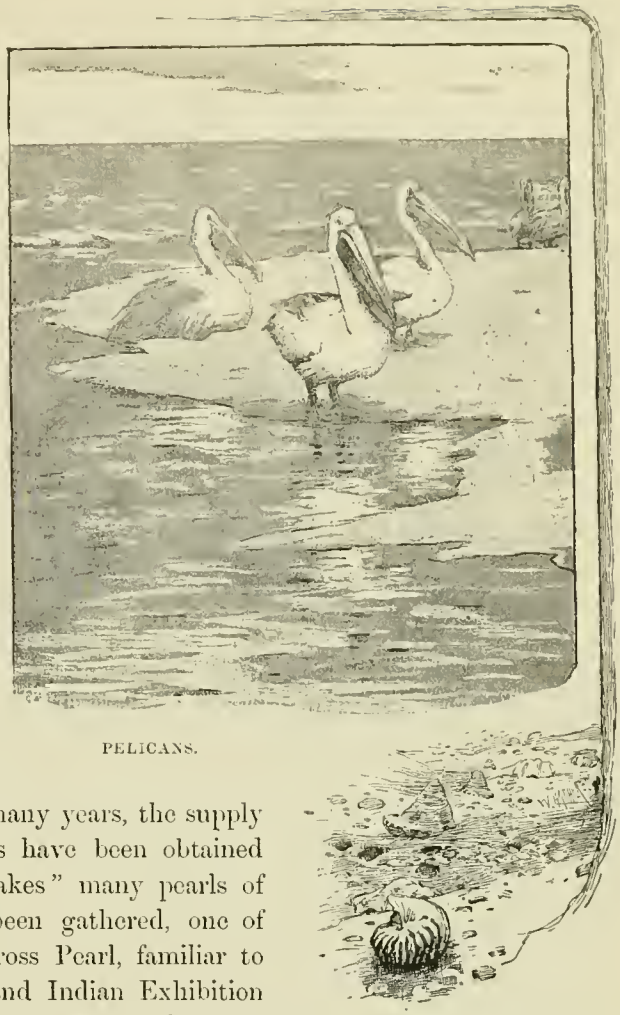
decorate the scene, to the farmer they mean a heavy expenditure in clearing and preparing the ground for the work of the plough. Most of the cultivable land lies between Albany and Champion Bay; north of the latter district the country is more suitable for the pastoralist than the farmer and gardener. In the more southern portions, besides cereals and vegetables, grow the fig, grape, peach, loquat, guava, banana, apricot, nectarine, apple, pear, lemon, orange, and melon, in great abundance; and in some places English fruits, such as currants, cherries, and gooseberries, thrive well. The further north you go, the less luxuriant and varied are the fruits; and after you leave the Champion Bay district, you must abandon all expectation of a large supply of locally-grown fruit and vegetables. Unfortunately the poison-plant, which infests portions of the southern and eastern districts, has proved a considerable drawback to stock-raising, but many of the settlers devote considerable time and money to its eradication, and in not a few cases their efforts have been rewarded with a fair amount of success. The capabilities of the soil for the cultivation of cereals, vegetables, and fruits are most remarkable, the climate in most respects being a counterpart of that of California. It has already been demonstrated that the olive and the castor-oil tree will grow in wild luxuriance, and all that is necessary to establish large mulberry plantations for sericulture is capital. For many years now a large and growing trade in jarrah has been carried on with the other colonies, India, and England, and, in a less degree, sandal-wood has been an important factor in the list of exports, while large quantities of wattle-bark have been used for tanning purposes both within and beyond the colony.



MAGPIES.

In addition to these and other resources of the colony, there are its mineral products, the oldest of which are the lead-mines at Northampton, which have been worked with varying results for a great number of years. Iron, tin, and copper are also known to exist in almost inexhaustible quantities, and a species of coal was discovered in the north some years ago. Last, but not least, must be mentioned the discovery of what there is every reason to hope will prove extensive gold-fields in the Kimberley district. Up to the present time the reports received from the fields vary considerably. Some are most discouraging: and, unless they were received *cum grano salis* would lead one to suppose that this the latest reputed find, was as great a

fiasco as those which were reported years ago. The information from the most reliable authorities for the most part lead conclusively to the belief that "reefing" will before long become payable, but that, owing to the lack of a plentiful water-supply, the alluvial soil cannot be profitably worked—at any rate, for some time to come. That, however, need not be long. What the district lacks in a natural supply of water can be made up by artificial means, and when once the Government are in a position to take the matter in hand, and, either out of public funds or by loan-moneys, undertake the sinking of artesian wells, alluvial mining may be successfully prosecuted.



PELICANS.

Of the splendid pearl and pearl-shell fisheries lying to the north-west of the colony it may be said that, although they have been worked for many years, the supply seems inexhaustible. Large quantities have been obtained from the banks, and amongst the "takes" many pearls of large size and great brilliancy have been gathered, one of the latest being the Great Southern Cross Pearl, familiar to most of the visitors at the Colonial and Indian Exhibition in London. In 1885 the pearls found were valued at £15,000. In Shark's Bay a smaller kind of shell is collected on a large scale. Besides the trade in pearls and shells, considerable quantities of bêche-de-mer are annually collected for export to China.

Animal life in Western Australia, as represented by "beasts and all cattle," is not varied, the principal four-footed things being kangaroos, opossums, wallabies, bandicoots, native cats, and the native dog—the last a small, sheep-eating, yellow-coated animal, very like a wolf, against whose predatory habits the sheep-owners are perforce obliged to wage continual war. Bird-life is more numerous, but though many of the species are very attractive on account of their handsome plumage, their powers of song are very indifferent. There are cockatoos of several kinds—black, white, cream-coloured, and dark-grey—the white being the most common, and the grey the most prized. The parrot family is a very large one, and amongst its members may be found probably the gayest and handsomest plumaged birds in Western Australia. Perhaps the prettiest are those known as rosellas. But for the difference in the beak, one might almost fancy that

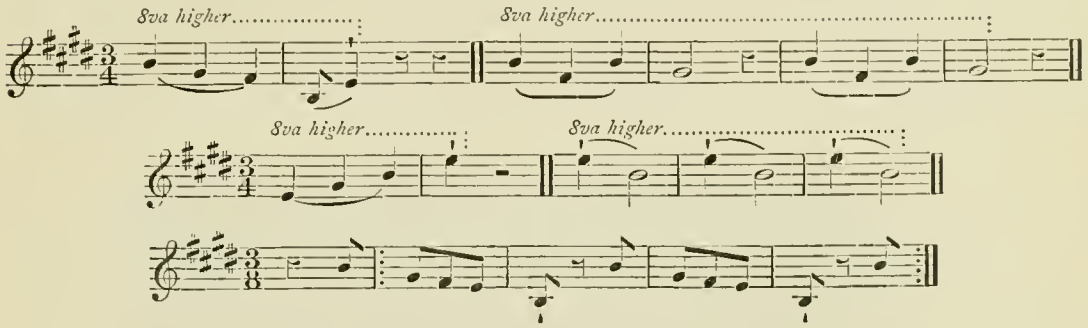
Master Robin Redbreast had attired himself in a bright green coat instead of a black one, and donned a red cap to match the lovely colour of his waistcoat. Unfortunately, although tamed as easily as a robin, your rosella is as stupid as he is beautiful, and as sorry a songster as "Jenny Wren's husband" is a delightful one.

The other members of the family deserving attention are the green parrot, a fair singer and excellent talker and a larger species of the same colour, remarkable for the resemblance which its cries bear to the words "twenty-eight." The noisy parroquet, the odd looking pelican, the tiny quail, the ugly bustard, are also natives of the colony; there are, again, magpies, pigeons, wild duck, wild geese, and several varieties of hawk, the chief of which is the great eagle-hawk, a large brown and grey bird, whose wings measure six feet from tip to tip, and whose home is among the cliffs and rocks. On the plains the gnou, a gallinaceous bird, piles its eggs in a heap with leaves, and abandons them to be hatched out by this leafy incubator, while the emu, which somewhat resembles an ostrich in shape, and is much sought after on account of its dark-green eggs, and brownish-grey feathered coat, lays its eggs in the sand, like the large bird it resembles. The black swan gave its name to the original settlement, and has its place on the Western Australian coat-of-arms; and instead of a representation of Her Most Gracious Majesty's head, the local postage-stamp bears that of the sable bird sailing on a river. The mina (a small grey bird) is easily domesticated, becomes greatly attached to its owner, and is a very charming household pet. Owls are unknown, but there is a small brown bird, called indifferently mopoke and howler, which somewhat resembles the owl in appearance. It frequents the swamps, and "oft in the stilly night" the bushman's sonorous slumbers are broken by its hoarse, dismal croak, sounding not unlike the words "More pork! more pork!" The wattle-bird is so named from the fact of its home being in the wattle-trees. Its notes are very melodious, but only at times, as the pretty brown thing occasionally displays a perverse inclination to utter a rasping cackle which grates horribly on the ear. According to the natives, who, like Scheherazade's merchant, claim to understand the language of birds, the "wattler" upon those occasions condescends to human language, expressive of the excellence of the "mungite," which in the native tongue is the name of the banksia flower. They assert that he says, "Mungites, mungites, quabba! quabba!" "Quabba," be it remarked, signifies "good." But it requires plenty of imagination to distinguish the words.

It is very difficult to obtain reliable information respecting the birds that sing. My own experience of bush song-birds was gained in the Champion Bay district several years ago, but unfortunately they were so shy that it was difficult to obtain a close view of them. They came every autumn, and, so far as I could see, were of diminutive size, and resembled the marten, the sparrow, and the wagtail. Between them they produced (chiefly in the early morning) a great variety of notes, some having as many as five and six apiece, which they sang to a quick waltz measure. It was one of my chief delights to start out very early in the morning, and, after rejoicing in the sight of the glorious sunrise, which nowhere in Western Australia is so beautiful as in the north, to lie on the grass beneath the trees and listen to the shy little warblers

ABORIGINAL WOMAN AND CHILDREN.

pouring forth their morning hymn of praise of the Creator. Listening frequently to their notes, I learned to whistle them in my own poor way, which was a full octave lower than their pitch, and hence it is that I am able to give below a written illustration of their songs. The double bars divide one song from another:—

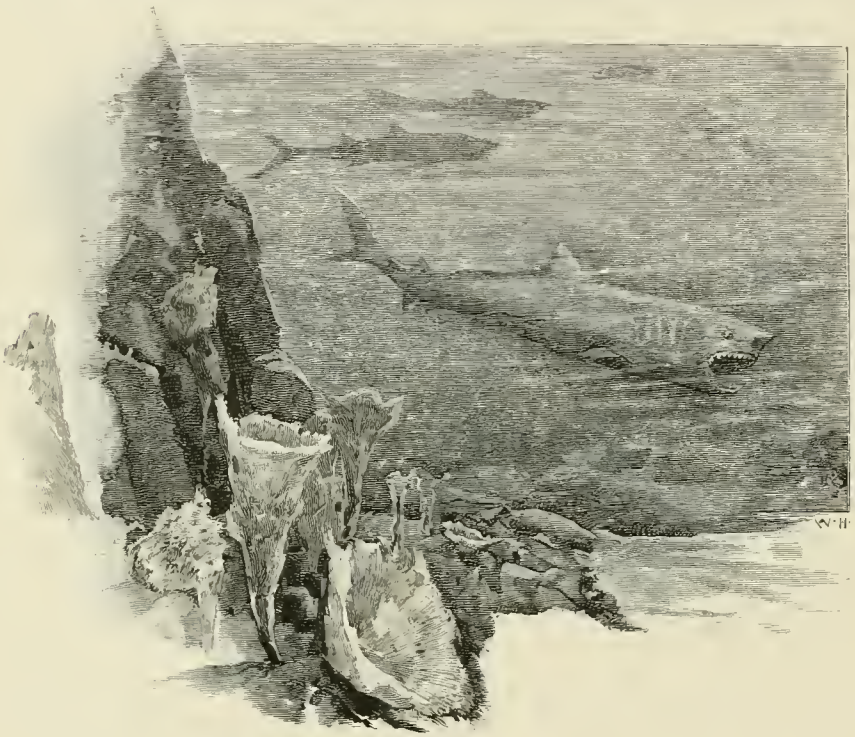


The principal reptiles are snakes, iguanas—"go-anna" is the local bucolic pronunciation—and lizards, of which there are several species. Many of the first-named are poisonous, especially the black and the whip snake, and those which inhabit the rivers. There are also ophidians of the constrictor species. But, as a rule, venomous snakes rarely attack man unless interfered with. The iguanas vary in length from about eight inches up to three feet, and their colour is either black, brown, yellow, or slate. The smaller species are the most common, particularly the "bob-tailed go-anna."

At the risk of being accused of romancing as extravagantly as that delightful old story-teller Sir John Maundeville, I venture to describe two or three of the smaller species of reptiles. The mountain devil (*moloch horridus*), a queer-shaped lizard, all spikes and knobs, and gifted (like the chameleon) with the power of changing its colour, is too well known to require description. But not so familiar, even to Western Australians, is a small black lizard with a head resembling a land-turtle's. This little creature is remarkable for its beautiful shiny skin, and the peculiar cry—short, sharp, and shrill, like the angry yap of a diminutive dog—which it utters when disturbed. Another remarkable reptile, to which I ought to have referred when mentioning the snakes, is a two-legged variety. It is not too well known that most snakes have a couple of small legs. Those of the species I am dealing with, however, have, considering their size, very large ones. The reptile is about ten or twelve inches in length, and its legs, which are placed some four inches from the tail, are about an inch and a half long, and by their aid their owner can leap a considerable height in the air. The batrachian family is well represented in the colony, and after the early rains in the autumn, when the swamps are covered with water, may be heard at nights a mile away chanting their "moonlight minstrelsy" in tones to which nothing but distance could lend enchantment. Mellowed by the acres of ground lying between the drones and the listener, the bull-frog's croak becomes a pleasing bass, while the shriller voices of his green, brown, black, yellow, and speckled brethren form the lighter parts. But to sleep—or, rather, endeavour to do so—near a creek in the bush, with a combination of

batrachian and canine melody (the croak of the frog, and the howl of the native dog), is an experience almost worse than a nightmare.

Insect-life in the colony does not call for lengthened notice. The butterflies, grasshoppers, and beetles, although numerous, possess, as a rule, but few attractions. It was at one time believed that the firefly had its habitat in certain parts of the colony. It was stated by people who slept in the bush that at night some of the trees were lit up by winged, luminous insects, which gave forth quite a bright light. Investigation, however, proved that the supposed insect was nothing but small fungoid growths on



SHARKS.

the branches of the tree, which shot out phosphorescent sparks in the dark, and to which the swaying of the branches in the breeze gave the appearance of fireflies flitting amongst the leaves. A peculiar insect—and one I do not remember reading of in entomological treatises—is a flying, or rather jumping, centipede. Crossing a reaped field one day, I was startled by seeing something spring out of the stubble a few feet in front and alight at my feet. Upon examination it proved to be a bronze-coloured centipede, about fifteen inches in length: and while I was watching it, it gathered itself up, after the fashion of the cheese-jumper, and sprang away. I saw several afterwards, but never cared to inspect them too closely.

All the waters of Western Australia abound in fish—whiting, herring, mullet, bream, schnapper, cobblers, and tailors on the coasts and in the rivers; whales, sharks, and seals in the seas; while occasionally alligators make their appearance in the north.

Crayfish are also abundant in both seas and rivers, and Cambridge Gulf boasts of the giant crab, a crustacean monster large enough to afford a meal to several persons. Oysters, both pearl and edible, dugongs and sting-rays, and also trepang are to be found, and on one or two occasions the jolly mariner has brought in news of the sea-serpent.

OLD BATHURST.

Early Days in New South Wales—An Impassable Barrier—Discoveries—Founding of Bathurst—Depredations—Saturday—A Convict Outbreak—Depression—Good Times.

THE town of Bathurst has already been dealt with in this work,* but something remains to be said of the interesting district of which it is the centre, interesting not only from its natural beauties and fertility, but also from the fact that it was the first part of the interior of New South Wales discovered and settled. The early settlement of the colony, from the years 1788 to 1815, was confined principally within that portion of the country drained by the eastern tributaries of the Hawkesbury River, which for a considerable part of its course runs close under the foot of the Blue Mountains. These mountains were not passed until 1813, and they formed a barrier to any progress into the interior. Before this time, however, abortive attempts had been made to scale their rocky and precipitous sides. Bass penetrated some little distance into their ravines, and discovered the Grose River. George Caley, a botanist, in 1804 took what afterwards proved to be the right track, and reached a point seventeen miles west of the Hawkesbury. As he was unprovided with horses, his men became "knocked up," and he had to return. Commencing in 1809, a long period of drought now visited the settled districts. The necessity of seeking more pasture for the increasing live-stock of the colony induced Messrs. Gregory Blaxland, William Wentworth, and Lieutenant William Lawson to make an attempt, of which we have already had occasion to speak, to solve the mystery of the interior.†

They determined to follow the course of a ridge which seemed to divide the waters of the Warragamba and Grose Rivers, and by this means to ascend to the highest point of the range. They started on the 11th of May, 1813, and on the 29th of that month they succeeded in crossing to its western side that sandstone plateau which is now known as the Blue Mountains. Their task was no small or light one, and is most important from the fact that from that day the great pasture-lands of the interior of Australia began to be opened up. Although this was the general result of their labour, they did not penetrate so far into the country as to reach the waters trending to the westward and the interior. In November, 1813, Mr. George W. Evans, an assistant surveyor, was despatched by Governor Macquarie to endeavour to discover a passage over the Blue Mountains, "and ascertain the qualities and general properties of the soil he should meet with to the westward of them." Mr. Evans with his party followed the track of Blaxland, and, "continuing in a westward direction for twenty-one days, passed over several plains of great extent, interspersed with hills and valleys, and abounding in the richest soil, and with various streams of water and chains of ponds." This is the earliest description we have of the country now known as Bathurst. "Mr. Evans was of opinion that these plains had a capacity for every demand which this colony

* *Vide* Vol. II., pp. 78–86. † *Vide* Vol. II., pp. 39, 40.

may have for an extension of tillage and pasture-lands for a century to come." Mr. Evans must have been either very sanguine of their capacity, or else was not able to see very far into the future.

Governor Macquarie at once ordered a road to be made to the newly-discovered lands, and drove over the Blue Mountains in his "cabriolet," reaching the site of the city of Bathurst on May 7th, 1815. He fixed upon the site for the future city, and named it after Earl Bathurst, the then Secretary of State for the Colonies. On his passage over the mountains he also named various points of interest—the King's Table Land, Prince Regent's Glen, the Vale of Clwyd, Cox River, &c. &c. The lands on the plains during the next few years were parcelled out and given to settlers on condition that they paid a small quit-rent, and employed a certain number of convict-men, according to the acreage of their grant. The Government reserved all the land lying to the west of the Macquarie River for their own live-stock, and established herds of cattle there. The small village of Kelso was the first attempt at forming a town on the Bathurst Plains. An old two-storeyed house, falling rapidly into ruin and decay, and supposed to be haunted, was the principal inn of the place; and here the judges held court, and the early settlers gave assize-balls on such occasions. Mrs. Dillon, the landlady, was a celebrated character in the early settlement of the west. Among the most remarkable of the English gentlemen who made their homes here was Captain John Piper, whose property at Alloway Bank was celebrated for its breed of horses and cattle and its dairy produce. The lavish and unbounded hospitality of its owner, who was never happy unless when contributing to the amusement and enjoyment of his neighbours, was almost proverbial

IN THE BLUE MOUNTAINS.

In its early days the district had its troubles from depredations of the aborigines under their great chief Saturday, and also of runaway convicts or bushrangers. The natives belonged to the tribe of the Wirridgerie. Their home extended from near Mudgee, across the country including the valleys of the Macquarie and the Lachlan, to the Murrumbidgee. Saturday was such a desperate character that the Government

offered as reward for his capture a grant of 500 acres of land; this was in 1824. In 1830 an outbreak of the convict population in the district took place. They gathered together to the number of eighty, all more or less armed. However, for want of plan and through defection, their number became reduced to thirteen. When they had shot an overseer at a station, a meeting of the inhabitants of Bathurst was convened, and a

THE VALLEY OF THE GROSE, BLUE MOUNTAINS.

small body, some twelve in number, of volunteer cavalry was formed. This party came up with the insurgents among the ranges of the Abercrombie River, not far from where the small mining township of Turnkey now stands, or rather falls. A sharp skirmish took place, but the bushrangers were not captured; their numbers afterwards increased to twenty, and having nearly destroyed a party of mounted police, they surrendered to a force of soldiers and police who had followed them to the Lachlan River. Ten of them were hanged at Bathurst.

In the early forties a great wave of commercial depression passed over the colony, and many of the early settlers on the plains were swallowed up in its hungry vortices. Sheep which had been bought a year or so before at £2 2s. per head could not find buyers for as many shillings. As sheep-farming was the principal industry in those times, many of those who engaged in it at the time of high prices thus saw their capital swept from them. However, things revived somewhat, and a slow state of prosperity and progress continued until May, 1851. Then the district, and indeed all the colonies, were aroused by the news of the discovery of gold at the Summer Hill Creek, some thirty miles to the north-west. Numbers of people from Sydney and the neighbourhood rushed to the "diggings." Shortly afterwards, the Turin gold-field was discovered, and then the Hundred-weight of gold was found. This brought thousands of persons into the district, and the prosperity of the place advanced by "leaps and bounds." Sheep and cattle and all farming produce increased in value enormously. Wheat that was quite a drug at 1s. 6d. per bushel now sold at £1. Fat cattle that had been worth 30s. became worth from £6 to £10. As the money to pay for them was at once dug out of the soil with little labour, all this prosperity was very real. Land that could scarcely be given away at £1 and less per acre became worth £20 and £30. The town, of course, participated in the prosperity, and began to be built upon very rapidly, and has gone on without any very material check until the present time.

EARLY EXPLORERS BY LAND.

The Veil of Mystery—Across the Blue Mountains—A Great Puzzle—Oxley—Drought—Oxley's Second Expedition—The Inland Sea—Hume and Hovell—The Australian Alps—The Murray—Homeward—Sturt—Search for the Inland Sea—Desert—Bitter Waters—Sturt's Second Journey—Down the Murray—Unpleasant Friends—The Southern Ocean—Major Mitchell—Richard Cunningham—The Darling—A Successful Journey—Eyre—The Australian Bight—Baffled—Hopeless—Help at Last—Dr. Leichhardt—His End—Mitchell and Sturt—Depôt Creek—Trials—The Stony Desert—The Return—Relief.

EXPLORATION by land in Australia commenced almost with its settlement in 1788, and can hardly be said to have finished yet, for though the leading features of the continent are now pretty well known, and the need for great exploring parties has passed away, there are still blank spaces on the map of Australia—blank spaces which it will take years to fill, but which will one day be filled; for, slowly but surely, settlers are pushing out into unknown country, making for themselves new homes beyond the very borders of civilisation.

It is curious now to read how very little was known of the land less than a century ago, when Governor Phillip and his little band of exiles were set down in the midst of an unknown wilderness, and the whole continent lay before them a field for future exploration. They went to work at once, and their early history is the history of their constant effort to lift the veil of mystery which hung around them in this new world. The country was difficult, but little by little the narrow strip of land to the north and south of the settlement was thoroughly surveyed. To the east was the sea (we have already told of the labours of Flinders and Bass in that direction); and to the west were the Blue Mountains, a barrier which seemed effectually to bar all further progress. But it was not always to be so. The summer of 1813 proved exceptionally dry, the grass was all gone, the waters failed, the stock were dying wholesale, and all felt that either new pastures must be found or the colony would miserably perish, and, stern necessity driving, one more determined effort was made to cross the Blue Mountains.

Three men whose names deserve to be remembered (to us nowadays they are but names)—Wentworth, Blaxland, and Lieutenant Lawson—set out, and in little more than a month returned triumphant with the joyful news that after suffering terrible hardships, toiling through the scrub and over the ridges, they had at length found themselves in pleasant, well-watered pastures on the other side of the hitherto impassable Blue Mountains. Immediate steps were taken to make this discovery of some avail, and the deputy surveyor-general was sent by Governor Macquarie to examine the new track. He followed in the footsteps of the three pioneers, and, going further still, found that he had crossed the watershed between the eastern and the western waters, and discovered flowing to the west a large and beautiful stream, which the blacks called Wambool, but which he re-christened in honour of Governor Macquarie. Then he returned to Sydney and reported the

country as splendid, and well calculated to supply the needs of the all but starved-out colonists.*

The river of which we have spoken was a great puzzle to the colonists, and was destined to remain so for many years to come. In most new countries the mouths of the rivers have been discovered first, and the great question has been, "Where is the source?" Here it was the other way. Everyone knew where the Macquarie came from; what they wanted to know was, where it went to. Flinders had laid down a pretty accurate chart of all the coast, save that to the west, and had found no great river; and it seemed utterly impossible that this stream should flow right across the continent. Where, then, could it go? Further exploration only deepened the mystery, for two days' journey west of the Macquarie was found another river, which was at once called the Lachlan, that being the Christian name of the Governor. So here were two rivers flowing to the unknown west, and where they went to was the question of the day.

HALF BY LAND, HALF BY WATER.

The first exploring expedition sent out by enterprising Governor Macquarie had the surveyor-general, Lieutenant Oxley, R.N., as leader, with twelve others under him, among whom was Allan Cunningham, the king's botanist. The expedition was well equipped with provisions, pack-horses, and scientific instruments, and the river chosen was not the Macquarie, as might have been anticipated, but the far less interesting Lachlan. Two boats had been built for the use of the explorers, and, launching these on the sluggish waters, they started on their journey.

The river flowed through vast monotonous swamps and casuarina scrub, better known by its colonial name of she-oak, and the channel was full of "snags," which

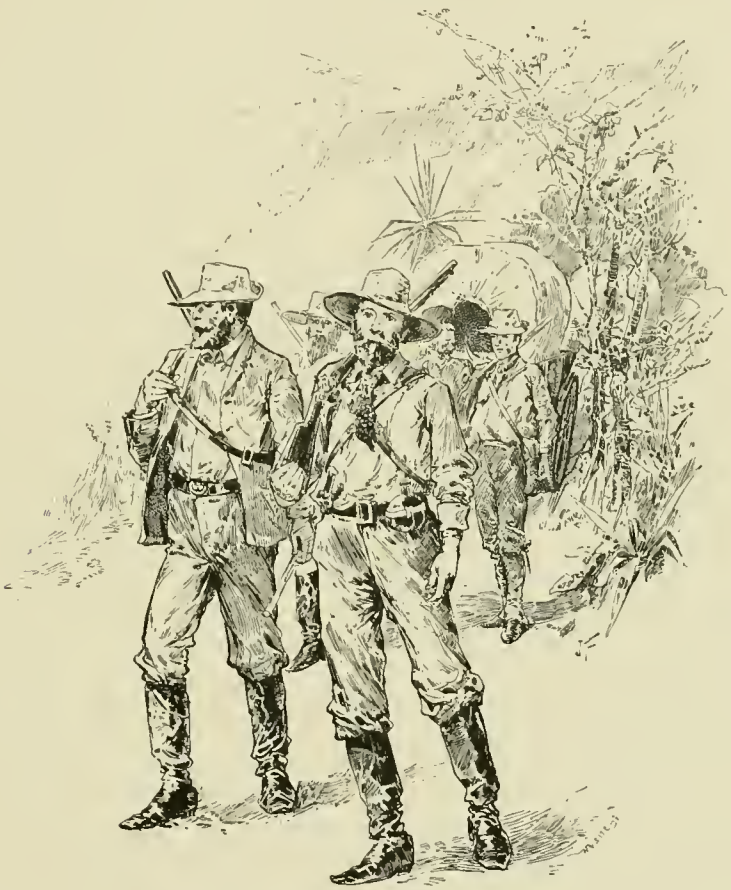
* For a more detailed account of these explorations, see p. 166.

obstructed the boats not a little. By land, too, they hardly fared better. It was evidently a wet winter among the mountains, for the river, beginning to rise, soon overflowed its banks, and the horses, in skirting the swamps, had each day to make longer and longer journeys round, so that the progress of the explorers was necessarily very slow. Day after day the scenery was always the same, as Australian scenery generally is. Day after day showed them the sluggish river stretching for miles across the plains, its channel only marked by the tops of the drowned water-gums which grew on its banks, and beyond the water the dead-level plains, broken but seldom by stony ranges or isolated rocky hills. Oxley's heart sank within him, but he held on till the second week in May, when, to his dismay, the river apparently terminated in a vast swamp of reeds, so thick and tall that it was impossible for the boats to force a way. Accordingly he abandoned the boats and part of the baggage, and, relying only on his horses, set his face towards the south-west in the hope of finding other rivers, or, at least, of reaching the coast in that direction.

And now a new description of suffering began for the party. Formerly the country was desolate because of the superabundance of water; now it was still more desolate because of the want of it. Day after day they forced their way through myall scrub, or over dreary plains where there was neither grass nor water; all the water they did find was in small lagoons in the scrub, and the only wonder is they should have found any at all. At last, weary of the effort to force their way through a waterless belt of mallee-scrub, which they now saw for the first time, and despairing of ever reaching another river, they turned north again. When only twenty-three miles from the Murrumbidgee, and after another journey which almost resolved itself into a struggle for life, they struck the Lachlan free from swamp and flood, and still running westward deep between its banks. There were plenty of fish in the river, and numberless birds, cockatoos, crows, and the beautiful bronze-wing pigeon; therefore, even though provisions were running short, as there was some prospect of the party supporting themselves by their guns and rods, Oxley, despite the gloomy view he took of the country—barren, desolate, and useless to man and beast as he thought it—determined to push on and find out if he could what became of this strange river, which had evidently received no tributary since last they had seen it. It was a weary journey, for they soon came upon fresh marshes, and horses and men were obliged to struggle through bogs and swamps which hardly allowed them to drag one foot behind the other. This could not go on for long, and perhaps the explorers were hardly sorry when, on the 1st of July, they found the river again losing itself in impenetrable marshes, a very forest of tall green reeds. They had now traced it down 500 miles, or 1,200 counting its windings; and Oxley, utterly unable to account for its character, which after all is that of all Australia's largest rivers, came to the not unnatural conclusion that these reedy swamps and impenetrable marshes skirted the borders of a great lake or inland sea, and, hopeless of reaching its shores, he turned back in search of the Macquarie. Both men and horses suffered greatly, and their provisions were well-nigh exhausted before they found it; but they were amply rewarded, for they crossed

many of its tributaries, and found them flowing between fertile valleys and well-wooded ranges—country which even Oxley the pessimist could not but admit was well worth discovering. They reached Bathurst nineteen weeks after they had left it, and just four days after their provisions had given out entirely.

Though the sailor Oxley had little idea of the value of the land he had discovered, and, as we have seen, thought it barren and useless, the Government were



THE HUME AND HOVELL EXPEDITION.

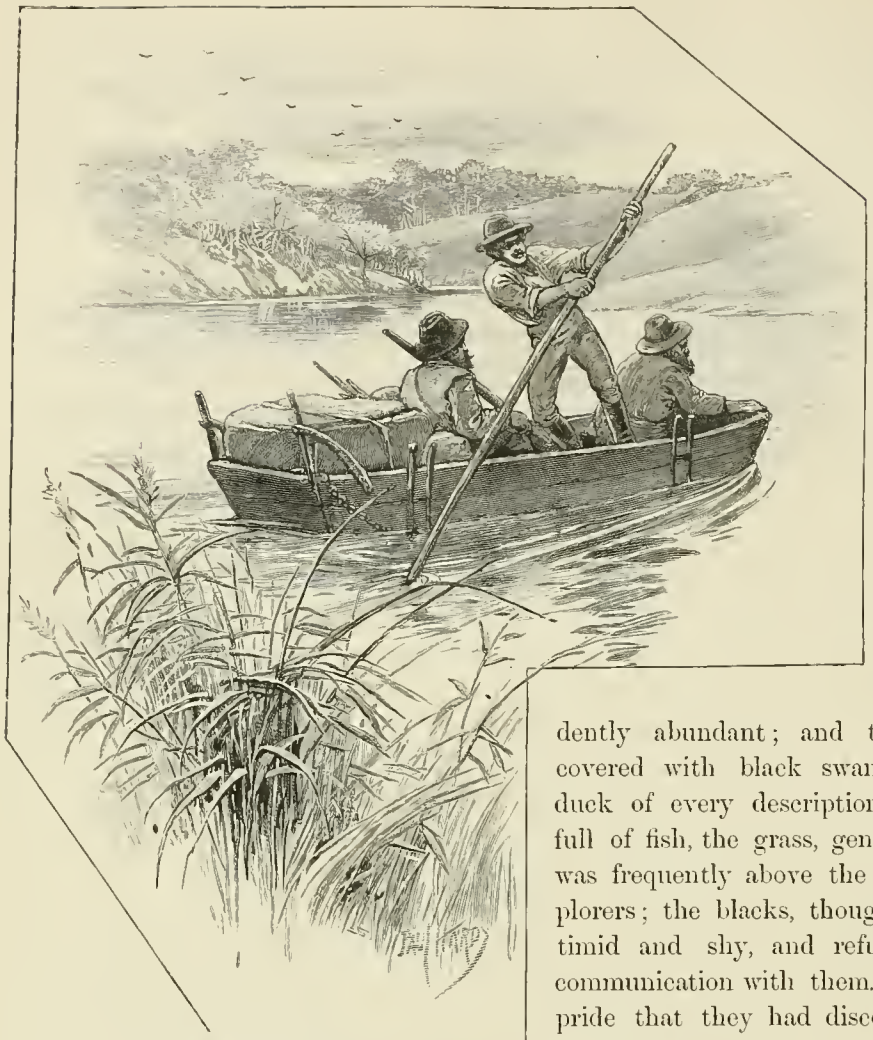
well pleased with his efforts, and more eager than ever to solve the riddle of these western rivers, for Captain King, just returned from his survey of the western coast, had dashed all hopes of a great river having its outlet there. Oxley's idea, then, of a great inland sea took firm hold on the minds of the people, and the next year, 1818, saw him once more at the head of an exploring party, endeavouring to trace down the Macquarie, which promised far better than the Lachlan had ever done. The same order was observed in this as in the former expedition, half the party going by land with the horses, while the rest dropped down the river in boats built specially

for the purpose. At first things promised well. The Macquarie flowed briskly on between high banks two and three hundred feet apart, the country on either side was rich and beautiful, well watered by several tributaries, and seemed suited either for grazing or agriculture; and though there were many rapids, Oxley at first deemed them of little consequence. Floods were what he dreaded, and as yet there was little sign of them. Gradually, however, the character of the country changed; dead-level plains took the place of the gently-wooded hills that had so charmed the explorer; the Macquarie began to get shallower and widen out, and, alas! to assume the exact characteristics of a river that he knew only too well. Still he persevered, until flatter and flatter became the land, shallower and shallower the water, and the floods rose and spread over the plain till the course of the river was marked only by the long line of water-gums which grew on either bank.

Oxley formed a depôt on a little hill he called Mount Harris, almost the only break in the plains for many miles, and left there the horses, while he himself pushed on with the boats, for it was useless to think now of travelling by land. The reeds began to appear, they grew thicker and thicker, they took the place of the gum-trees, and finally the boats moved down the channel between green walls of close thick reeds which rose four or five feet above the heads of their occupants. Still they pushed on, for surely, Oxley thought, he must be nearing the sea now. Once through those reeds and he would find himself floating on its placid waters. Still the channel grew shallower and shallower, till the boats could barely float, and at last they lost it altogether, and their way was barred by a dense, thick, impenetrable wall of reeds ten or twelve feet high. It was useless to dream of cutting their way through, and, despairing and hopeless, convinced that he had again reached the border of the inland sea, but utterly unable to catch any glimpse of its waters, Oxley returned to Mount Harris, which was about 300 feet above the level of the plain. Here the look-out was not encouraging: for as far as the eye could see stretched flooded plains, while the north and west were barred by the impenetrable swamp. He therefore turned east, and, abandoning the boats, made as direct a line as he could for the sea-coast. At first the way was across boggy plains, and there was neither game nor blacks to be seen. Gradually, however, as they approached the coast-range, the character of the country changed; it became hilly and beautiful, was well watered, and they saw numbers of blacks and abundance of game. Once on the dividing-range between the eastern and the western waters in that part of New South Wales now known as New England, the country became still more beautiful and romantic. Lovely fern-gullies, towering gum-trees, creeks and waterfalls, steep rocky ridges and wild gorges, met the eye at every turn; but while Oxley admired and rejoiced that at length he had discovered country well worth exploring, he saw only too clearly that, for difficulty of crossing, these mountains were second only to the Blue Mountains themselves. How they crossed these mountains, many of which were 6,000 and 7,000 feet high, we have not here space to tell. Suffice it to say that they did cross them, and at last found themselves on the shores of the Pacific at Port Macquarie, whence a weary and toilsome journey down the coast brought them at length to Sydney.

This was Oxley's second expedition, and though he had discovered a great deal of new country, the courses of the western rivers remained as great a mystery as ever. About this time, however, Government zeal for Australian exploration appears to have cooled for a season, and accordingly the next expedition was conducted almost solely by private enterprise. Once the Blue Mountains were crossed, the country was opened up slowly but surely by the people themselves, without the aid of needless and expensive exploring expeditions. A squatter's run in those days consisted of just so many square miles of forest or plain as he needed for his cattle to roam over. The next comer pushed out again beyond him in search of fresh country, and so the land became known. In this manner Hamilton Hume, a native-born Australian and thorough bushman, had, before he was eighteen, discovered the country round Berrima; and again, in 1817, he discovered Lake Bathurst and Lake George, thus opening up the way for further exploration of the country round the head-waters of the Murrumbidgee. In 1823 this stream was discovered, adding a third great river to those already known which were flowing away into the unknown west. And now, since the desire was to know what manner of country lay between this river and the sea, the ever-active and energetic Hume undertook to explore it. As Government provided little beyond six convicts, pack-saddles, a tent, and a small quantity of ammunition and stores, Hume (who was not a rich man) associated with himself Hovell, who was to share the expenses. This was a mistake, and in part marred the whole expedition, for Hovell, though he may have been a good sailor, was no bushman, and, accustomed to command, had ideas of his own as to the conducting of an exploring party, many quarrels in consequence taking place between the two leaders. They set out in October, 1824, a little party of eight, each armed with a musket, having with them two bullock-drays to carry the stores—a modest and slender equipment for such an expedition.

The Murrumbidgee was running a "banker"—water right up to the banks—and the explorers had some difficulty in crossing; but Hume's former experience stood him in good stead. Taking the wheels and shafts off one of the drays, with a little management he made it into a very good punt, by which the explorers with their belongings safely crossed the flooded river. Once on the other side, they found themselves among the broken and rugged country towards the sources of the Murrumbidgee. The way became more and more difficult; they were compelled to abandon their drays, much of their provisions—everything, in fact, that they could spare. More and more difficult became the way, and more and more beautiful the scenery. Range after range of rugged hills they crossed, till one morning there burst on the travellers the magnificent and unexpected spectacle of a semicircular range of dazzling white, snow-capped peaks, glittering in the hot summer sunshine. These (the first and only snow-clad mountains ever discovered in Australia) they called the Australian Alps. Beautiful though they were, they added considerably to the difficulties of the explorers. Descents and ascents, before steep, became now absolutely precipitous, but still Hume and his men toiled on, and at last, in the middle of November, they came upon another great river flowing west—a splendid river with a deep, broad current and well-defined banks, while the land on each side,



AN IMPROVISED PUNT.

though full of lagoons, was rich and fertile. For timber, there was the blue-gum towering above its neighbours, the aromatic peppermint and the quaint, stiff currajong; whilst innumerable creepers and parasites twined themselves round their branches. There were quantities of flax, and ferns of every variety; game was evidently abundant; and the lagoons were covered with black swans, teal, and wild duck of every description. The river was full of fish, the grass, generally breast-high, was frequently above the heads of the explorers; the blacks, though numerous, were timid and shy, and refused to hold any communication with them. Hume felt with pride that they had discovered a rich and fertile land, which only waited for civilised man to turn it to good account.

The river, after some little trouble, they crossed by making rude boats of wicker-work, and covering them with tarpaulin; and once across, they found themselves among the rugged, mountainous country at the head-waters of the Hume, or Murray, as the river was subsequently called. Creeks and rivers were numerous, and barred their way at every turn; hill after hill they ascended, hoping to catch some glimpse of the country beyond, only to be disappointed by finding in front another range equally high. At last Hume and Hovell, leaving the bullocks and men in camp, took four days' provisions, and with axes literally cut their way through the tremendous scrub in which they were involved on the thickly-wooded ranges. They made of course for the highest peak visible, but the country became worse as they advanced. They struggled on bravely, however, through a jungle of sword-grass over five feet high, which cut their clothes and flesh like knives, only to find, when they

reached the summit, that it was so densely wooded there was no view at all. Had the land been clear they would have seen the sea, as they fully expected to, and all the rich plain-land at the head of Port Phillip; for the hill, which they called Mount Disappointment, is not thirty-five miles away from Melbourne.

From Mount Disappointment Hume and Hovell turned back and rejoined their party. Then, making a new departure, they set their faces more to the west, and found they had at length struck the right route. Soon they reached the plains at the head of Port Phillip, and at length on the distant horizon saw the long looked-for sea. Joyfully, as may be imagined, they made for the blue waters, and found themselves on the shores of a large land-locked bay, which Hume thought Port Phillip, but which Hovell maintained was Western Port. By the public the latter opinion was at first pretty generally received, but subsequent investigation has proved that, in all probability, Hume was right. The two leaders had not time to argue it out on the spot, for their slender stock of provisions was well-nigh exhausted, while between them and their fellow-men lay many rivers and rugged mountain-chains; therefore they returned at once, almost exactly in their own tracks. Before they reached their drays their stock of provisions was entirely exhausted; but as the country abounded in game, and the rivers were full of fish, they were not in such bad case as many another Australian explorer has been. Thus they managed very well till they came to the drays, which with their supplies they found untouched—a piece of good luck for which they had hardly dared to hope. This was the more astonishing, as they had ample proof that the blacks had been there; and in all their wanderings they had found these sons of the soil (when they were not too timid to approach) thievish, inquisitive, and generally troublesome. A few days more and the Murrumbidgee was crossed; and in January, 1825, the explorers arrived safely at Mr. Hume's station on Lake George, having accomplished one of the most successful exploring expeditions ever undertaken, if the value of the country discovered be taken into consideration.

THE HUME MONUMENT, ALBURY.

Meanwhile the colony had been stretching out its arms to the north and west. The Darling Downs had been discovered, and on Moreton Bay Oxley had founded a new convict-station, which he called Brisbane. But every fresh discovery only deepened the mystery that hung over the centre of the continent, for numerous now were the rivers that were flowing away to the unknown west. Oxley firmly believed in the inland sea, which he thought he had discovered in 1818, and another explorer now

arose, who was also as firmly convinced of its existence—one who followed in the older man's footsteps, and far out-distanced him, and whose name is revered and honoured as one of Australia's best and bravest. That explorer was Captain Sturt. It seemed to him that Oxley's explorations had been made in unfortunate years—years when the amount of rain that had fallen was phenomenal, and not likely to occur again. In 1826 one of those periodical seasons of drought, extending over two or three years, came upon Australia, and it struck Sturt that this was the very time to prosecute the search for the inland sea. Government sharing this opinion, Sturt was, in 1828, put in command of an expedition, Hamilton Hume being his second, with orders to follow up the Macquarie.

Not till the beginning of December did the expedition (consisting of thirteen persons, with all the requisites for an exploring party) leave Bathurst and begin its arduous duties. Sturt had wished for a dry season, and he got it with a vengeance. It was midsummer. The hot Australian sun poured down its pitiless rays on the country which Oxley had found green and beautiful, but which to Sturt and his followers was parched and arid. The creeks and tributaries were dry; the Macquarie had shrunk to a slender stream, often a mere chain of water-holes; the wind when it blew was as a breath from an oven, and the thermometer frequently stood at 129° in the shade, while in the sun it was almost unbearable. The mosquitoes and the terrible kangaroo-fly made life a burden to them, and before they reached Mount Harris two of the men were blind with ophthalmia. Oxley, from the summit of that hill, had looked round on a weary waste of waters, which barred his way in all directions; Sturt, from the same vantage-point, saw a vast ocean-like expanse of arid plain, while the river at his feet (the only water for miles) could hardly be perceived in its channel. Following its course they, after a few days, found themselves approaching the marshes—a dreary expanse of reeds and polygonum scrub—which hemmed them in on every side and barred their way, even as it had stopped Oxley more than ten years before. Sturt launched the boat he had brought so far, and endeavoured with two men to descend the river. It soon lost itself, however, splitting up into various small channels among the reeds. They could discover no signs whatever of an extensive lake, and, though the weather was dry and extremely hot, it was impossible to penetrate the marshes.

Under these circumstances, Sturt took a fresh departure, and, turning more to the north, rode for two hundred miles over country consisting alternately of sandy plains and scrubby patches of bush-land. Everywhere the country was parched, and they suffered much from want of water. The few blacks they saw were diseased and emaciated, and fled in terror at the sight of men on horseback, while game was conspicuous by its absence. At last, just as the want of water was becoming serious, they came, in the beginning of February, 1829, upon a considerable river, about eighty yards wide, flowing to the south-west. Its reaches were covered by innumerable wild-fowl and pelicans, while its banks were shaded by magnificent water-gums. Rushing down the steep banks, the thirsty men flung themselves down by the river, only to find, as its waters touched their parched lips, that they were salt—salt as brine. Sturt was

in despair. He had pushed bravely on through desolate and arid country, hoping against hope for that inland sea which was his goal, only to find a river too deep to ford, too broad to cross, and whose undrinkable waters forbade any long stay on its banks.

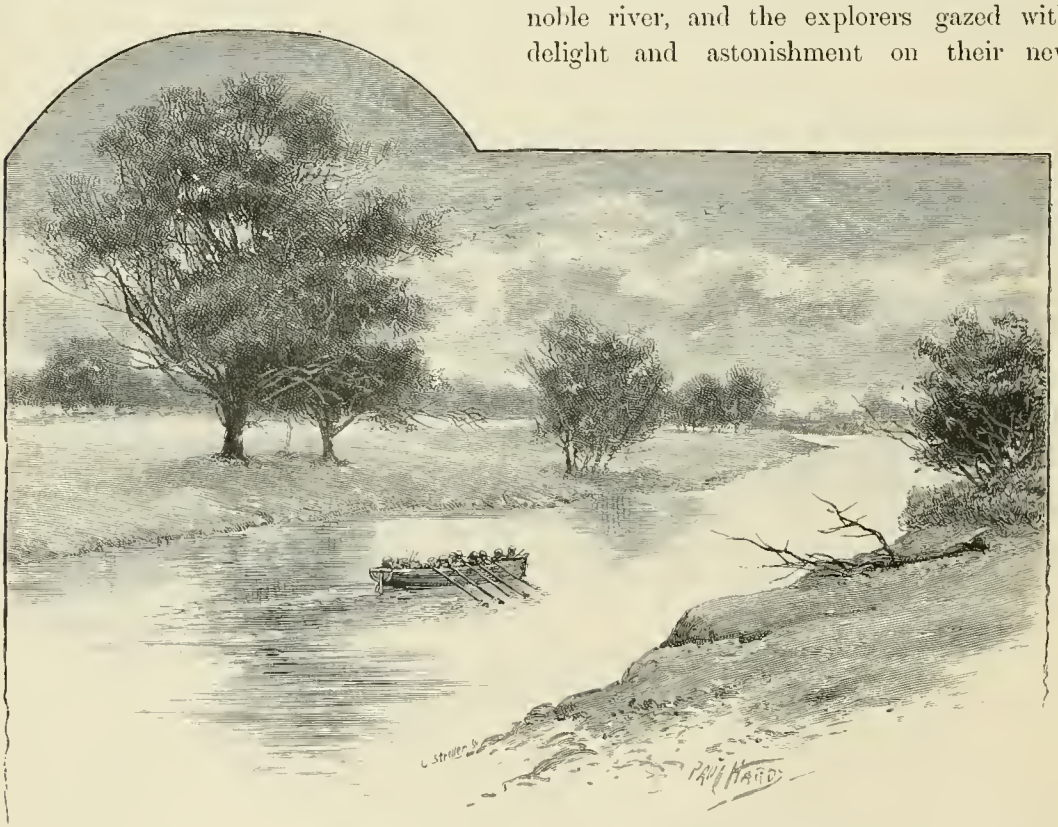
Still, having found a little water, sufficient for immediate needs, Sturt pushed on a little longer. The character of the river never varied, and his hopes of finding the inland sea grew less and less as he advanced, till they vanished altogether when he discovered salt-springs bubbling up in the river itself. Here was another river flowing west—another mystery to solve; and it was with the greatest regret that Sturt at length, compelled by want of water, turned his back on the Darling (as he called it), and retraced his steps to the depôt at Mount Harris. It was time. The water was drying up all round, and the foremost streams of the Macquarie were become mere chains of water-holes, in which the water was so low that Sturt declares the fish were swimming with their backs out of water, and the crows were pecking at them. The scrub round Mount Harris was all on fire, and the heavy smoke-wreaths added a fresh dreariness to the already desolate scene. The depôt luckily was quite safe, and, after recruiting, Sturt made another effort to reach the Darling nearer its source. To do this he made for the Castlereagh, which Oxley had found a splendid river, with waters bank high. When Sturt arrived there, however, its bed was dry and full of reeds, sand, and brambles, and his party were obliged to seek for their scanty supply of water in scattered creeks and water-holes, the only wonder being that they found any at all. For five-and-forty miles there was not a drop of water in the Castlereagh. The very forest-trees were dying, and when at last they reached the Darling, it was only to find it as salt as it had been ninety miles further down. It was useless to explore further. Sturt did cross the river, and attempted to push on north, but vast waterless plains, bare as boards, were perhaps as effective a barrier as Oxley's floods and marshes, and he returned to Mount Harris, and thence to Sydney, with enlarged notions as to the effect of a hot season near the tropics in Australia.

Sturt's journey, though he had not discovered much beyond a barren desert watered by a river salt as the sea, dispersed in some measure the inland-sea theory; and now a new one arose—namely, that the rivers flowing west (the Darling, the Lachlan, the Murrumbidgee, and perhaps the Murray—or the Hume, as it was then called) all joined in forming one great river, which fell into the sea somewhere—the colonists hardly knew where—probably on the south coast, though Flinders had surveyed it and found no great river there. To solve this new mystery (or, rather, the old mystery in a new guise) Sturt once more set out, in November, 1829.

It was proposed to follow down the Murrumbidgee, both because it had the most westerly course, and because its smooth, deep current promised a larger and more important river than the Lachlan. At first the journey was pleasant enough. The weather was glorious, though perhaps a little hot, and Sturt, putting together the whale-boat he had brought with him in pieces, floated down the broad, deep current of the river, which flowed on between beautiful grassy flats, where was excellent pasture for the cattle and horses, and where game, kangaroo, and emu, and birds of every

description abounded. But this did not last long. As they advanced, the country grew poorer and poorer; barren plains and useless and dreary casuarina scrubs took the place of the rich pasture-lands; and more and more the banks on either side reminded Sturt of the Lachlan. At last, as they approached the 144th degree parallel, at which all the rivers had hitherto disappeared, Sturt was obliged to send back the drays to await his return at the Goulburn Plains, and with only seven men started down the river in the whale-boat. Fifteen miles after they had left the drays they came upon the junction with the Lachlan, the latter flowing a shallow stream amidst marshes such as Oxley had described, only they were dry now under the hot midsummer sun.

After that there is not much to chronicle, for the country was flat—flat as a board—and the tall reeds stood close and green on either side. Swifter grew the current—swifter and swifter; there was no need to row, it was all the steersman could do to keep the boat clear of snags; the river grew narrower and narrower, and then (just as they were full of the gloomiest forebodings) the boat shot out into a broad and noble river, and the explorers gazed with delight and astonishment on their new



DOWN THE RIVER.

discovery. The Murray (for so they called it) was three hundred and fifty feet across; and they guessed at once that it was the stream Hume had crossed nearer the mountains. The country here was flat and uninteresting, as it had been for many

hundreds of miles, but they could not see much of it unless they landed, for the banks were never less than eighteen feet high. The blacks became very numerous, and at first were hostile, but Sturt, who was just the man for such an expedition, soon con-

A POSITIVE NUISANCE.

vinced them that the white strangers meant them no wrong, and then they went to the other extreme, and became a positive nuisance, for they must needs touch everything, which, seeing they were an unclean, not to say a filthy people, was very undesirable. Not even on the river could Sturt keep clear of them, for they would crowd into the water and swim so close to the boat as to impede the men at their oars. These friendly feelings continued till they approached the junction of the Darling, and there, on a sandbank jutting out a third of the way across the river, right in their path, Sturt saw, drawn up in battle array, four hundred stalwart blackfellows, their bodies painted with a white pigment to resemble skeletons, or daubed with yellow and red ochre, and shining with grease. Silent and still stood the sable warriors, ready to oppose the white men's progress with a perfect forest of spears, while behind them their women yelled in hideous chorus. For a moment a battle seemed imminent, though the odds were as fifty to one, but again Sturt's good luck and ready tact saved them, and in a few moments they had joined their whilom enemies, and blackfellows and whites were soon on the friendliest terms.

The long-looked-for Darling was a stream three hundred feet across, though only

about twelve deep, and its waters were no longer salt, but slightly green, and tasted of vegetable decay, telling of its passage through extensive marshes. The little party were now far beyond the very outskirts of civilisation, the provisions were getting low, and they knew not whither the river was taking them; still they persevered. Presently the river changed its character, the sandy scrubs and reedy lagoons gave place to high cliffs, and the river flowed on between lofty precipices varying from one hundred to five hundred feet high, and in February it turned due south, and all Sturt's doubts as to his ultimate destination were at an end. It must fall into the Southern Ocean on the south coast, and he hoped for a harbour worthy of the splendid river he had traced so far. It was now a third of a mile wide, and the waves which rolled up its centre were a serious inconvenience to the whale-boat; still its waters were quite fresh, and this was puzzling. Where, then, was the sea? At last they sailed out into a magnificent lake, which they calculated must be at least fifty miles long, and perhaps not quite so broad. Alas! Australia is a land of disappointments—geographical, at least. Gradually the lake shoaled, shallower and shallower it grew as they sailed across it; its waters became salt, but they hardly served to float the boat. Soon they could hear the boom and roar of the surf on the coast, and when they reached the southern shore they found, indeed, the looked-for channel, no less than half-a-mile in width, but so choked with shoals and sandbanks that even the whale-boat could not struggle through to the ocean beyond. Captain Sturt made his way across the sand hummocks, and stood for a brief space on the shores of the Southern Ocean, at the place which Flinders had called Encounter Bay. One glance round on the sandy waste, and he realised fully how it was that the great mariner had never so much as suspected the existence here of the great river for which he was for ever on the look-out. There was time but for one glance, and then Sturt and his men turned their faces once more to the rising sun, and on the 13th February, 1830, commenced their voyage home.

If the outward journey had been difficult and weary, the homeward one was twenty times worse. Their provisions were nearly exhausted, they had nothing but flour left, and this, served out in scanty rations, was but poor fare for men who must needs pull against the stream from dawn till sunset, and often till late on in the night. They had no time to land and hunt for game; the fish in the river they had grown to loathe—besides, the season was over, and they were not easily caught. The blacks followed them perseveringly, sometimes friendly, sometimes hostile, but always troublesome, always thievish, dirty, treacherous, as it is the nature of the Australian blackfellow to be. One thousand miles these weary, exhausted, starving men pulled to the Darling, to the Murrumbidgee, to the Lachlan, to the place where they had launched their boat, and still the rendezvous was 200 miles away. Shorter and shorter grew the daily journeys, more weary and more exhausted the men. Pale and emaciated they sat at their oars, and yet such was the love and confidence which their leader inspired that never a murmur, never a word of reproach escaped their lips. Only at night, when he might sleep, did they complain.

Seventeen days they pulled on; then one of them went mad, and the rest fairly gave in and drew the boat on shore, though they were still ninety miles from their

destination. Two of the strongest set out to walk to the depôt on the Goulburn Plains, while the others waited. A week passed, and they had divided their last modicum of flour, and, desperate and starving, were about to follow in the footsteps of their comrades as the last hope of saving their lives, when a loud shout announced the arrival of the necessary succour. Thus reinforced, the rest of the journey was accomplished with ease, and in six months from the time of their setting out Sturt and his companions were once more in Sydney, having accomplished in the interim the greatest discovery yet made on the Australian continent, although with the smallest means at his command. But the triumph was a dearly-bought one, for ophthalmia had made him its victim, and even as soon as 1833 he was totally blind, and quite unable to read his journals, which were published in that year.

The fate of the western waters was decided to the satisfaction of most people, but the Surveyor-General, Major Mitchell, held Sturt's geographical ideas and knowledge in the greatest contempt, refusing even to believe that the Darling fell into the Murray, but maintaining that it had a different watershed; and when a runaway convict told, perhaps to curry favour with his captors, of a mighty river flowing towards the north-west, Mitchell eagerly caught at the idea, and towards the end of 1831 set out with a large following to seek for this mythical river and the central watershed which its existence implied. Major Mitchell was one of the old-fashioned explorers. He set out on his journeys into the wilds with a large following (convicts, artisans, soldiers, bullocks, horses) and an immense amount of baggage, which required a long train of waggons and drays to carry it. Rapid marches were of course out of the question, so that, though the work was thoroughly well done, with the least possible amount of anxiety and suffering to all concerned in it, they got no further than the Upper Darling, whose tributaries were thoroughly explored, much new country being opened up for the squatters who were bound to follow in their wake. At the Upper Darling the hostile attitude of the blacks, who swarmed round the camp, and on one occasion murdered in their sleep two of the men, made Mitchell hesitate, and finally decided him to be content with what he had accomplished. He therefore returned to Sydney, and did not set out again till March, 1835, when, at the head of a very large expedition, amply equipped for exploration in a country which Sturt had found inexpressibly barren, he endeavoured to trace down the Darling.

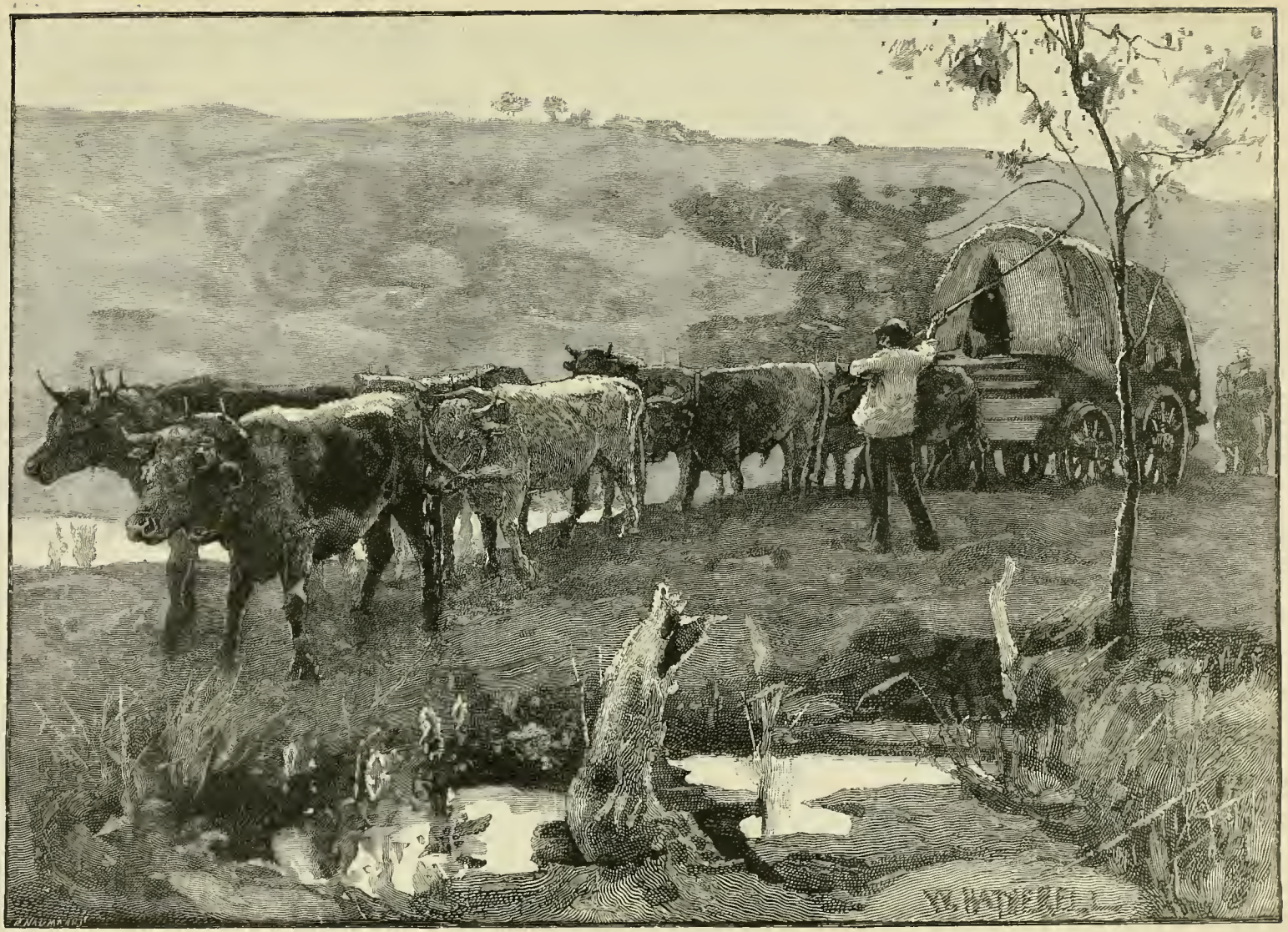
A sad incident marred the expedition at its very outset—namely, the loss of Richard Cunningham, the younger brother of Allan, who had accompanied Mitchell as botanist. He was no bushman, and had repeatedly been warned not to stray from the camp. One day, however, he was missing, and though a search was promptly instituted, he was never seen again. We have not space here to tell the sad story. It is the old, old one of the man who strays and gets bushed, wanders on hopelessly round and round, crossing and re-crossing his own track; recklessly abandons his horse, his hat, his pipe; even leaves the banks of the flowing creek, which is his only hope of safety. So the searchers found it had been with Mr. Cunningham. They found his horse dead from thirst; they found his tracks, traces of him everywhere, and not for eighteen days—till all hope was gone—did they abandon the quest; and not till their return journey did

they discover that, starving and parched with thirst, he had fallen in with the blacks, who had brutally murdered him.

Spite of this delay they reached the Darling very near where Sturt had first struck it. Now the waters were sweet and drinkable, and Mitchell followed it down. There was no doubt about its being the same river. There were the same barren, treeless plains, the same sluggish current, and the same broken, earthy banks, with their belt of dark timber, the only break in the landscape for miles. The stream kept its southerly direction, but the land became more and more parched and withered as they advanced. There was no grass, there were no trees, only the wiry polygonum scrub, which is an unsightly leafless bramble. The blacks whom they saw were afflicted with ophthalmia, and were much diseased; sometimes they were hostile, sometimes friendly, but equally objectionable in either guise. At last, when Mitchell calculated that he was but 100 miles from the Murray, the aridity of the country, the sickness of his men (who were suffering from scurvy), and the increasing hostility of the blacks determined him to retrace his footsteps.

The end of the year again saw him at the head of a large expedition, once more endeavouring to complete the survey of the Darling, and this time he determined not to cross the waterless plains, but to follow it up from its junction with the Murray. Accordingly, the expedition moved slowly down the Lachlan, which, nineteen years before, Oxley had found a flooded stream flowing through one vast morass, but which now seemed to have completely changed its character, for Mitchell found it a mere trickle, often dry, and usually only a chain of water-holes, while the land around was barren, arid, and full of cracks, which rendered travelling difficult and unpleasant. The Murray once reached, the character of the country again changed, and they found themselves impeded by the swamps and billabongs of that river. The blacks, too, were here exceedingly hostile, and before they were convinced of the superiority of the white man a pitched battle had taken place, in which seven of the sons of the soil were slain.

Spite of difficulties and dangers, the party at length reached the junction of the Murray and the Darling, and even the doubting Mitchell was satisfied, without exploring further, that his rival's geographical knowledge was not at fault; and he turned his face south, crossed to the hitherto unexplored bank of the Murray, and began the most successful journey of Australian exploration that has ever been recorded. It was mid-winter, the most charming season of the year on the Murray. The skies were deep, cloudless blue; day after day the sun shone bright and warm; game—kangaroo and emu—was plentiful; myriads of bright birds were to be seen; and the explorers gazed with delight on rich and fertile land, which only waited for the hand of civilised man to turn it to good account. Day after day, as they advanced further into the heart of the country, fresh beauties burst on their view. Soon they found themselves among mountains, whose rugged grandeur came as a shock upon men accustomed for so long to the dreary plains further north, and when from the summit of the highest, which he called Mount William, Mitchell, as the rising sun dispersed the mists of early morning, saw, away to the south, rich, well-watered



A BULLOCK WAGGON.

plains, he cried that here at last was Australia Felix, a land well worth the toil and trouble it had cost him to find. Once on the south side of the mountains, they came upon a river—broad, rapid, and deep—and the whole party moved slowly down the valley of the Glenelg, universally acknowledged to be one of the most beautiful spots in Australia. Without ceasing, the rain came down in torrents, the rich soil became heavy and boggy, and the carts were brought along with the greatest difficulty. Amidst weather like this they passed down the beautiful Vale of the Wannon and traced the Glenelg to its mouth, only to find that, like all Australia's rivers, it was so choked with sand that there was not even a sheltered boat-harbour.

Before he returned, Mitchell made another descent through the rich boggy land to explore Portland Bay, where he came upon the settlement of the Brothers Henty from Launceston. After resting for a few days at this unexpected haven, he turned his face homewards, and traversed what is now Victoria in a north-easterly direction. The rest of his story is soon told. As he proceeded he saw no reason to alter the favourable opinion he had formed of the new country, but the soil was boggy, the bullocks were exhausted, and the rations were giving out. The blacks, too, proved troublesome. Glad, then, was Mitchell when, after crossing the swollen Murray, about where Albury now stands, he found himself within a few days' journey of the borders of civilisation, for in 1836 the settlers had pushed out almost as far as the northern bank of the Murrumbidgee.

Now that so much good pastoral country had been opened up in New South Wales and Victoria, the colonists on the east coast seemed willing for a time to let the toilsome and expensive task of exploration drop, but in the newly-formed colony of South Australia new country was greatly desired, and the colonists began to wonder if it might not be possible to open up a stock-route to Western Australia.

Eyre, already well known as an explorer in all the colonies, and the next man who comes prominently forward, pointed out that it was useless to look for a road in that direction, for, however tempting it might be to penetrate the mystery that lay behind the cliffs of the Australian Bight, even if a man got through, the country was evidently so sterile that stock must inevitably perish. He recommended instead that an expedition should be sent to seek the centre of the continent, and offered to bear half the expenses himself. The party was soon equipped, Eyre being at its head, and having with him his overseer Baxter, four other men, and two blacks. In June, 1840, they set out, choosing, as was usual, the winter months, in the hope that they would not be so straitened for water. In July they reached the head of Spencer's Gulf, and after receiving a fresh supply of provisions there, endeavoured to push forward into the unknown country. But the land was barren, far out-rivalling any sterility seen by Sturt or Mitchell on the Darling. Amidst a desert of red sand-ridges, stretching away north and west far as the eye could see, Eyre came upon Lake Torrens, one vast sheet of glittering white salt. There was no fresh water to be found, and to cross the lake was impossible, for the crust of salt, on being trodden upon, gave way beneath the feet, and a soft blackish mud oozed up. Eyre then turned more to the east, and

made his way north. Still the country did not improve; though it was mid-winter, it was evidently suffering from a drought of more than one season's duration. All the creeks were dry, the gum-trees, when there were any, were apparently slowly dying, and every day seemed to show him more clearly the absolute impossibility of advancing. The whole party suffered much from want of water. Eyre himself was often days without, and suffered terribly in consequence, and, as if to add to their sufferings, the mirage mocked them with its false promises of cooling shade and trickling water.

At last, in September, they reached a hill which Eyre called Mount Hopeless, for from its summit he saw not only a level barren plain stretching in hopeless sterility to all points of the compass, but to the east and north he could see what appeared to him another arm of Lake Torrens, barring, in his opinion, his way north. In reality this was Lake Blanche, one of the many salt-water lakes that stud that part of the country in all directions, and Eyre might have found, as others afterwards did, a passage between them; but even if he had done so, the entire absence of fresh water would have forbidden his advancing. The sole result of this, the first of many journeys to the centre of the continent, was that Lake Torrens for many years appeared on the map of Australia as a huge horse-shoe, almost surrounding the north of South Australia.

Baffled towards the north, Eyre turned his thoughts to the west, which he himself had pronounced impracticable. The difficulties in the way at the very commencement would have effectually daunted a less energetic and determined man, but in the beginning of November he had established his depôt-camp immediately behind the sand-drifts of the coast at Fowler's Bay. The whole country was barren and forbidding, but there was some scanty grass for the horses, and they had found water by digging in the sand.

From here Eyre commenced a series of excursions, endeavouring to get round the head of the Bight, but all his efforts only served to show him the hopelessly sterile nature of the country, and the utter uselessness of further exploration in it. By dint of sending forward drays and burying water, he managed at last, with great difficulty and the loss of several horses, to round the head of the Bight, and came upon the high cliffs described by Flinders, only to find the same frightful country of sand and desolation, without a solitary tree, and nothing in the shape of vegetation but a few prickly shrubs and mallee-scrub. It was midsummer, and the heat in such a country was terrible; still he went fifty miles further before he turned and made his way back to Fowler's Bay, having penetrated only 135 miles along the coast. Yet it had taken him forty days, during which time he had travelled backwards and forwards no less than 643 miles, mostly on foot, for the horses were too weak to carry any of the party. After his return to Fowler's Bay, a cutter came in from Adelaide, bringing fresh stores and a black boy named Wylie (an old servant of Eyre's, and a native of King George's Sound). But the cutter was only chartered for South Australian waters, and could not attend along the coast to leave supplies at different points, as Eyre desired. The country was too barren to dream of taking even so small a party as the one he had under him through with safety without the cutter, and therefore he determined to send back the

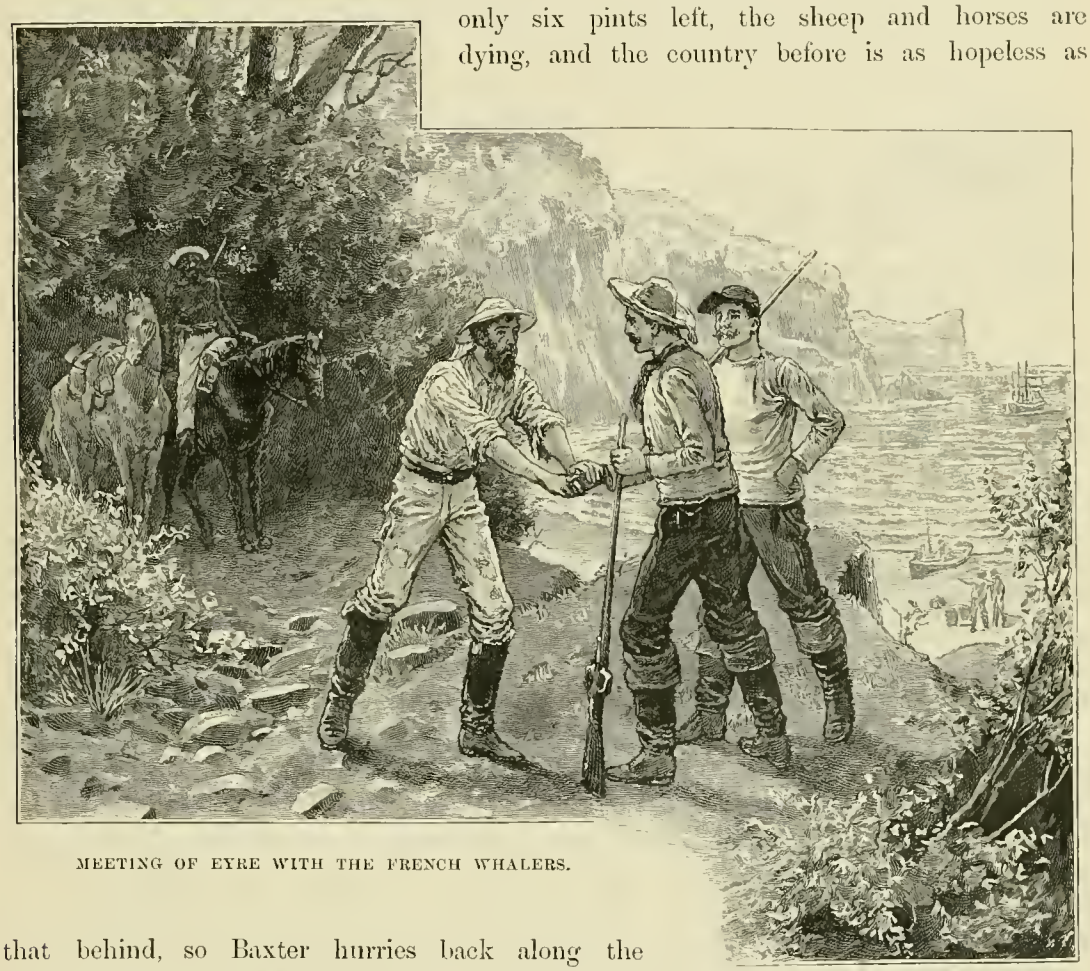
ADIEU.

whole of the Government party, retaining only his own overseer, Baxter, and the three black boys. While he was making his preparations, and recruiting the horses on the oats and bran that had been sent, the cutter again came back from Adelaide, bearing letters from the Governor and many of Eyre's friends pressing him to abandon a scheme which would certainly bring him much suffering, probably cost him his life, and be of use to no one.

But Eyre was not to be dissuaded; he had failed to the north, and to the west he *would* go, if it cost him his life. Sorrowfully and sadly they bade the rash man adieu, and returned to Adelaide, and that very day—23rd February, 1841—he and his little party set out, having with them eleven horses and six sheep. They had seen several families of blacks about Fowler's Bay, and, these explaining there was no water till they had rounded the head of the Bight, Eyre had taken the precaution of burying both food and water to help them over the first stages of their journey; but the blacks disturbed these *caches*, and once or twice they arrived only just in time to see the precious fluid spilled on the burning sand and the thieves carrying off the flour. Nevertheless, they struggled on; the heat was intense, the drought terrible; the flying sand blinded them, the dreaded kangaroo-fly made life a misery; and again and again the sheep and horses had to be left behind while one of the party went forward to seek water.

Amidst difficulties such as these Eyre in March reached the head of the Bight, and henceforward his journal is one long story of suffering both for man and beast. Day after day they journeyed along the tops of the same interminable cliffs, day after day the same dark scrub or wiry shrubs met their gaze; but never did they come upon a lagoon, a creek, or a swamp; never did they find, except by digging, one single

drop of water, and often and often they dug and found none. It is always the same story: one hundred and thirty-five miles and no water, and then, as Eyre begins to abandon hope, they find a little by digging. They rest here where is the precious fluid for a day or two, and then on again through the same killing country. Forty miles and no water; they have only six pints left, the sheep and horses are dying, and the country before is as hopeless as



MEETING OF EYRE WITH THE FRENCH WHALERS.

that behind, so Baxter hurries back along the cruel coast to the last water, while Eyre guards the sheep — now reduced to three: and this is repeated, not once or twice, but over and over again. Baxter, with a sort of presentiment of his fate, has long ago given up hope, has ceased even to implore Eyre to return, for it is almost as hopeless to think of retracing their steps as to push on. It is needless to recount their daily sufferings at this stage; each day brought the same hopes and fears and bitter disappointments; here some baggage abandoned, there a horse left behind; now another tied to a tree in the vain hope that, if they reached water before night, they might send back and save him. Less and less grew the baggage. Eyre abandoned everything he could, but still so weak and emaciated were the few horses that remained, that they could hardly stagger along under their light burdens. The

men after a heavy dew sometimes procured water by brushing the leaves of the bushes with a sponge, but the poor dumb beasts were often four or five days without, and followed their masters about like sheep, mutely striving to call attention to their piteous need.

And now another danger threatened Eyre and his devoted companion. The rations were so short that the black boys, whose appetites were always insatiable, became mutinous, and at last two of them deserted. It would have been well had they gone clear off, but one night—while Eyre was absent from camp, watching the horses, which, though hobbled, would stray in search of water and food—they returned, shot the sleeping overseer, and stole the greater part of the remaining stores. The shot, and a cry from Wylie, brought Eyre rushing back to camp, only to find his faithful friend in the agonies of death, the blood welling from a wound in his chest. The remainder of that night must have been terrible for the survivor. He himself writes:—"The horrors of my situation glanced upon me. I was alone in the desert. The frightful, appalling truth glared upon me in such startling reality as almost to paralyse my mind. At the dead hour of night, with the fierce wind raging around me, in one of the most inhospitable wastes of Australia, I was left alone with one native boy. I could not rely upon his fidelity, for he was perhaps in league with the other two, who might be waiting to kill me. Three days had passed since we had found water, and it was very doubtful when we should find more. Six hundred miles of country had to be traversed before I could hope to obtain the slightest help or assistance." "Ages," he says in another place, "could never efface the horrors of that single night, nor would all the world tempt me to go through a similar one again."

But the long night drew slowly to a close, and when at length morning dawned, Eyre found that the boys had left behind about forty pounds of flour and four gallons of water, besides tea and sugar, and with this small supply to last him and Wylie over the desolate desert that lay between them and their destination, with a heavy heart he set out. He had not even the melancholy satisfaction of burying poor Baxter, for the place was a desert of bare stone; he could but wrap him in his blanket, and leave him to the elements and the birds of prey. It was now the beginning of May; the nights were frosty, the winds keen; and Eyre, who, to ease the horses, had thrown away almost all his clothes, suffered terribly from the cold. Still the country was the same barren, scrubby table-land—there was no water, and the horses could scarcely crawl forward. The wonder was that they had held out so long. In no other part of Australia, probably, would it have been possible, but here, close to the sea-shore, the atmosphere was moist, and enabled them to bear up.

At last the two men passed beyond the terrible cliffs, along the tops of which they had crept for so many weary days, and water became rather less scarce, but their provisions were almost exhausted, and they lived for some time on the flesh of a horse which they had killed "to save its life." The result of living on diseased horseflesh was that by the middle of the month Eyre was so ill that for two days he lay in camp unable to move. It was death to linger, so on the third he crawled on again, finding, to his relief, the country improving as he advanced, and grass and water both more plentiful.

When the horse was all gone, they were reduced to a few spoonfuls of flour per day and such game as they might be able to shoot; but as they had long ago run out of shot, and for all weapons Eyre had only a rifle loaded with ball, such windfalls were few and far between. Besides, he was so weary and worn-out that he himself says if he once sat down it was only by the greatest exertion he could throw off the feeling of dreamy, careless lassitude which came over him. Assuredly, if help had not come soon, he, like the ill-fated Baxter, would have left his bones in the desert.

One day in June they finished the last teaspoonful of flour, and the next morning set out on their journey without any breakfast. Wearily they made for the sea-shore, and despairingly looked out on the waste of waters, as they had done many and many a time before. Who dare paint, then, the joy of these two starving men when they beheld a boat-load of men, and closer in shore a ship at anchor? Equally astonished were the sailors, but none the less heartily was the explorer made welcome by the captain and officers of the ship, which proved to be a French whaler. A fortnight's rest and care made a new man of Eyre, and when he again set out he was fully equipped, both with provisions and warm clothing, so that starvation no longer stared him in the face. There was, too, plenty of water. The horses were rested and refreshed, and if the grass was not exactly rich, it was at least clover to the poor animals who had struggled across the barren desert which fringes the Great Australian Bight. On the 7th July Eyre reached King George's Sound, not without difficulty, for the rivers were flooded, and the day before he had been compelled to leave the horses behind, and to abandon everything but the charts. Albany was only a miserable township, but the sight of the civilisation he had hardly dared hope to see again brought tears of joy and gratitude to his eyes, while he himself was received as one risen from the grave, for his friends had long ago mourned him as dead. The terrible and arduous nature of the undertaken he had so daringly accomplished will be better understood if we quote his own words:—

"The expedition passed through the most wretched and desolate country imaginable, consisting almost entirely of a table-land or of undulating ridges, covered for the most part with dense scrubs, and almost wholly without grass or water. The general elevation of the country was from three to five hundred feet. The first permanent fresh water met with on the surface was a small fresh-water lake beyond the parallel 123° E.; but from Mount Arden to that point, a distance of fully 800 miles in a direct line, none whatever was found on the surface, if I except a small solitary spring sunk in the rock at Streaky Bay. During the whole of this vast distance, not a water-course, not a hollow of any kind, was crossed; the only water to be obtained was by digging close to the sea-shore or the sandhills of the coast, and even by that means it frequently could not be procured for distances of 150 and 160 miles together."

This is the last we hear of Eyre as an explorer, and no wonder, for assuredly he had suffered enough to satisfy the most adventurous spirit; and though he discovered no fertile land, like Mitchell, his patience and his perseverance, his long-suffering and his heroism, will always find for him a place in Australian hearts and history. He appears next in history as the Governor of Jamaica.

In 1831 a little colony had been established at Port Essington, in the extreme north-west, which just about this time was looked upon as an important station on the overland route which the colonists hoped would soon be open to India and the East. The desire of all was now to pass overland from Moreton Bay, on the Queensland coast, to Port Essington, and accordingly, to discover the way, a small expedition, consisting of five white men and two blackfellows, set out in August, 1844, from Moreton Bay, under the leadership of the ill-fated Dr. Ludwig Leichhardt. At first their route was more north than west, and they advanced slowly through Northern Queensland, following the water-courses, and carefully examining the country—too carefully, in fact. Dr. Leichhardt, who was a scientific man fitted rather for a life of study than to be the leader of an exploring expedition, lingered so long that he himself tells us the men kept repeating—continually repeating—they should never reach the north coast. Their clothes were wearing out, and they hardly expected their provisions to hold out; but not till they were as far north as the Mitchell River, in York Peninsula, did Leichhardt at last turn west and skirt the shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria, which country he, tramping through with his lonely little band, found as dull and as uninteresting as Flinders, from the sea, had found it over forty years earlier. The blacks, who were numerous, proved hostile, as the myall blacks in the north generally are, and on one occasion, just as the explorers were resting from their labours, they stole through the scrub in the dusk of the evening and attacked the intruders. The camp had been foolishly pitched in a thick clump of ti-tree scrub, which covered the approach of the enemy, and therefore, before the alarm could be given, they had killed the naturalist, and with spears and waddies seriously wounded two others. Had the camp not been scattered, all would have inevitably perished, but as it was, the savages were driven off, and the wounded recovered more quickly than might have been expected. This was the more wonderful, as, though water was plentiful, the provisions were very low. The straits of the party must indeed have been great, for we are told that about this time they discovered that a bullock-hide boiled made good soup, and they consequently used up all they had in camp, while the young leaves of the bulrush were pronounced tolerable eating, and they even partook of flying foxes, which, however, were rather strong in flavour. They were now a ragged band of scarecrows, for their stock of clothes had long ago given out; many of them travelled half-naked, and none had boots; therefore they all wore a sort of mocassin made of hide—spared, we suppose, from the soup-kettle. It must, indeed have been a weary journey, for not till December, 1845, famished and naked, their last bullock eaten, and the only animals left the horses on which they rode, did they ride into Port Essington. In 1850 the whole of the north coast was abandoned, so that Leichhardt's labours, beyond discovering good squatting country and several rivers, benefited no one.

Leichhardt did not long remain inactive, but in 1847 set out with a well-equipped party to cross the continent from east to west. Unfortunately the season was wet, and all his people suffered so terribly from fever and ague that, unwilling as he was, he was compelled to return, but 1848 saw him again endeavouring to carry out his favourite project, with a much more slenderly-equipped party. He himself expected to reach

Swan River either in the end of 1849 or the beginning of 1850. In April, 1848, he paused for a moment on the very outskirts of civilisation on the Cogoon River, the last station he would meet with on his route; and from here he wrote to his friends cheerfully and hopefully, bidding them farewell, saying how certain he felt he should bring his journey to a successful issue. Then he set his face to the wilderness, passed away from human ken, and nothing certain has ever been discovered as to the fate

STURT AT DEPÔT CREEK.

of this ill-fated expedition. Several parties have gone in search of it, but with very little success, only a few scattered traces of its route being found.

While Leichhardt was toiling round Carpentaria, Sturt was suffering hardships still more terrible near the centre of the continent, and Mitchell was pursuing successful journeys more to the east. The idea of a great central sea was not yet given up, and Sturt, in especial, still cherished it, though he now fixed its position more to the west, and thought that in all probability it would be surrounded by a barren desert. It was to solve this problem that in the years 1844, 1845, and 1846, Sturt conducted an expedition whose aim and object was to reach the centre of the continent. In September, 1844, the whole expedition was assembled at the junction of the Murray and the Darling, and proceeded to trace up the small portion of the river not then known, till they reached

Mitchell's furthest point from the north, at a creek, or rather chain of water-holes, which he had called Laidley's Ponds, but which the blacks called Williorara.

From the moment they left Williorara their troubles began. The land was a dead-level plain, broken occasionally by rocky ridges, with here and there a flat-topped isolated hill. There were few trees, little water, and less grass, the only thing of beauty they saw being the desert-pea, then in full flower, and seeming to them in the midst of this barren desert a flower of unutterable loveliness. From the time they left the Darling their story is of one long search for water. Still Sturt managed to move slowly on, sometimes sending off small parties to the east and west, but ever with the main body moving slowly north; and yet, so barren and sterile was the land, it seemed as if not even the dews of heaven had wetted it since the Flood. To the east and west it was just as bad, and the curse of a desolate wilderness met them, whichever way they turned. The heat was frightful; even the nights were terribly hot; the scrub on the hills was often on fire, and the prospect of being without water, even for a single day, was too terrible to contemplate calmly. When at last, in the end of January, the thermometer had reached the incredible height of 131° in the shade, Sturt felt that further exertion was impossible, and pitched his camp on the banks of a creek they found issuing from a rocky gully, three miles from a hill they called Mount Poole.

At first this little spot, where there were grass and gum-trees and apparently an inexhaustible supply of water, seemed a very Paradise compared with the desert they had passed through, and they gladly pitched their camp there. From Depôt Creek, as he called it, Sturt made excursions east, west, and north, in a vain endeavour to penetrate further into the country, always to be stopped by the barren dryness of the land—for the fact was that all the waters, both before and behind them, had dried up for a great distance, and so continued for six months. In camp the men were suffering from scurvy, and both Dr. Browne and Mr. Poole, the assistant surveyor, were very ill. The mean temperature for the month of January was 104° in the shade. The creek shrank till all but the largest water-holes (it was but a chain of water-holes at best) were empty, the atmosphere was so dry that the drays all but fell to pieces every screw in the various boxes was drawn, the horn handles of the instruments and the combs split up into fine laminæ, the lead dropped out of the pencils, the signal-rockets were spoiled, the men's hair and the wool on the sheep ceased to grow, and their finger nails became brittle as glass. The flour lost eight per cent. of its original weight; the bran in which the bacon had been packed was perfectly saturated, and weighed almost as heavy as the meat; and the wax candles they were obliged to bury. Even the birds, which on their first settling at the creek had been numerous, all forsook it, and there remained only a species of large kite, which were so bold and so voracious that they swooped down and stole the meat from the pot or from the plate before its owner's very eyes. To escape some of the heat, and preserve if possible some of the things, Sturt had an underground room dug, and here the little company spent the greater portion of their time. Wearily they watched the bright blue cloudless sky, for rain was the only thing that could bring them relief. Again and again the clouds gathered and promised rain, but again and again the sky cleared

and the weather was bright as ever. April, May, June, brought no change, and Mr. Poole was very ill indeed. At last, in the middle of July, a gentle rain began to fall, a flood came down, and in two days the creek was bank-high. Immediately Captain Sturt despatched half the party on the return journey, with orders to hasten to the settled districts as the only hope of saving Poole's life. But it was too late. He was dying when they left camp, and before they had been gone a few hours he was dead. Sorrowfully they brought his body back, and buried him under a grevillea close to the depôt, and on it they cut his initials, "J. P., 1845." His grave lies in the desert, not far from the place where, not many years later, Burke and Wills were to die.

Immediately after Poole's death, Sturt broke up his camp and moved more to the north-east, where he built, on the Frome Creek, a stockade, which he called Fort Grey. Leaving the greater part of the men in camp, he, with Dr. Browne and three men, pushed on north. At first the country passed through was a sandy desert, but the scenery slowly improved; trees, grass, and creeks were to be seen; the blacks became numerous and friendly; and Sturt's hopes rose high, when suddenly there rose before him a sandhill, then another, and another, and for twenty miles they toiled slowly through the fiery-red sand-ridges, finding only salt lagoons for water, and, before they camped, Sturt saw from the summit of one of these sandhills that which utterly destroyed his hopes; for an immense plain met his gaze—a plain of dark purple hue, without a tree, without a blade of grass, without a trace of vegetation, a horizon like that of the ocean, the sands on which he stood forming the barren shore. Terrible as was the prospect, Sturt determined to cross this stony desert, and for two days toiled on, finding very little water and not a particle of food for the horses, for the only vegetation met with was a belt of dark, wiry, leafless polygonum scrub about two miles wide, the dreary appearance of which only added to the desolation of the scene. On the other side of the Stony Desert Sturt found the land like a ploughed field; still he struggled on, and was rewarded by finding a little grass and a plentiful supply of water in Eyre Creek, which, as it flowed north, he followed up. But in two days, to his bitter disappointment, it became salt, and terminated in a salt lagoon. The country was a desert of sand-ridges, the ground was almost encrusted with salt, dry salt lagoons could be seen glittering in the distance, and the only vegetation was a pink-flowered mesembryanthemum, or, as it is usually called, pig's-face, and the thorny spinifex, which grew so close and matted that it was with the greatest difficulty the horses avoided its sharp thorns.

Sturt felt that the end was come; there was no alternative but for him to turn back, within one hundred and fifty miles of the centre of the continent. All five were ill and exhausted before they reached the depôt in the beginning of October, but in less than a week the indomitable Sturt had set out on another expedition, taking with him three men, and leaving Dr. Browne in charge of the camp. This time he turned more to the east, and after passing through some wretched country came upon a splendid creek, or rather river, flowing through country looking as barren and dry as if it had not been rained on for ages. This he called Cooper's Creek, but, as it flowed east and west, he crossed it and pursued his journey north. The country, however,

grew worse and worse as he advanced, and at last he found himself once more gazing out over the Stony Desert, which stretched before him like a great dark purple ocean far as the eye could see. Once more he summoned all his courage and forced his way across, but that was all. On the other side were stony ridges from one to two hundred feet high; water and food for the exhausted horses there was none, and once more the brave man was driven back.

THE UNDERGROUND ROOM.

That return journey was the hardest of the many hard journeys they had made. A terrific hot wind blew across the plains, with nothing to break its force. The thermometer, graduated up to 127°, burst from the heat, and the ground was so hot that a match dropped upon it ignited immediately. Worse than all, they were straitened for food, and there was no water; the last stage of eighty-six miles they had not a drop; and when at last they reached the depôt, it was only to find it deserted, because, as a letter left by Dr. Browne explained, the water was putrid. Putrid or not, it was all they had to drink, and their straits will be better understood when we read that they hailed as a godsend some suet and some bacon fat which the dogs had buried. It gave them new strength for the rest of the journey. Sturt was now very ill from scurvy, but he felt that an effort must be made to save his companions;

therefore, spite of excruciating pains in every limb, he set out for a ride of twenty long hours, and on the 17th November reached the tents of the main camp at Depôt Creek, when assistance was soon sent to the others. The weather gave promise of a hot and dry summer, grass and water were scanty in the depôt, the country was rapidly drying up round them, and it was evident that, if they would once more see the dwellings of civilised men, there must be no delay in escaping southward. They set out at once, and not a moment too soon, for the first stage was 118 miles without a drop of water, and when they reached some in Flood's Creek it was black as ink. Before they arrived at the Darling all their supplies failed, and thirty-six hours before they reached Williorara they had not a scrap of food left. There, however, they were met by a relief party, and their sufferings were at an end. Not for Sturt though; since that terrible ride for life to the depôt, he had been unable to mount a horse, and during the latter part of the journey to the Darling he lost the use of his limbs, and had to be lifted in and out of the dray in which he travelled. With care and attention he recovered, but shortly after his return to Adelaide he entirely lost his sight, as a consequence of the hardships he had gone through. The immediate consequence of this central expedition was to explode the long-cherished idea of an inland sea, for which was substituted that of a great central desert—more, however, to the westward.

Here it is time to pause, for we have already trangressed our limits; but those readers who have been able to feel interested in this story of heroism and hardship will find it continued in a subsequent article.*

* *Vide* p 280.

COOPER'S CREEK.

MOUNT LOFTY.

Adelaide—Torrens Park—A Beautiful Panorama—A Summer Home—The Parklands—The North Arm—Bush Fires—Morialta—Baker's Waterfall—Norton's Summit—Anstey's Hill.

THE leading feature which used to meet the eye on approaching the anchorage of the P. and O. steamers at Glenelg, in Holdfast Bay, was the extensive range of hills which, five miles south, starts directly from the sea and stretches away in a north-easterly direction, bounding on the south and east the broad intervening plains on which Adelaide is situated. Nowhere does this range of hills attain a very great altitude. The highest and most central point is Mount Lofty, 2,400 feet, the long dusky-blue saddle-back of which stands out oftenest in hard outline against a bright-blue sky, but is also occasionally to be seen half-veiled in a soft grey mist or fleecy white clouds. To the residents of a city the temperature of which is more often hot than cold, the proximity of "The Mount," as it is familiarly termed, is a great boon. On holidays and high-days numbers of people are to be seen wending their way thither, returning in the evening laden with ferns and flowers.

For many years the only means of getting to Mount Lofty was by an excellent road, a ten-mile drive from Adelaide, with lovely peeps of the sea in the distance, and the beautiful view through the Waterfall Gully; but now an hour's journey by train to Mount Lofty Station, about three miles from the summit, will accomplish the distance. This railway is known as the Southern Line, and is the first section of the inter-colonial line to Melbourne and Sydney.

Between Adelaide and Mitcham the country passed through is some of the prettiest under the hills. Close by Lower Mitcham the railway line cuts through the large property known as Torrens Park, famous for its orangery no less than for the fine house which stands in its midst, with its own private theatre, hothouses, &c. The house is surrounded by such beds of flowers and tasteful ribbon-gardening as reminds one of England, or rather of Italy. All the varieties of shrubs and flowers, such as palms and masses of violets, flourish as luxuriantly out of doors all the winter as they do on the Riviera. This property once belonged to Colonel Torrens, one of the original English proprietors of land in this colony, and was laid out by his son, Sir R. R. Torrens, of "Real Property Act" fame, that great law reform which has been adopted by all the Australian colonies, and which is considered by many likely to become eventually the law of real property in England. To the north lies the small straggling village of Glen Osmond; further north, upon rising ground, are the large olive-plantations and vineyards of Beaumont, Burnside, and Magill, while the innumerable vineyards dotted about on the lower sides of the hills are refreshing bright-green spots for the eye to rest upon in the hottest of summer weather, standing out as they do from among the brown burnt patches of grass.

As the incline of the Belair Hills is ascended, there is a succession of beautiful

WATERFALL GULLY, NEAR ADELAIDE

views on the right; glimpses of a sea often as brilliantly blue as the Bay of Naples, bordered with the whitest of white sandhills, with the fashionable watering-place of Glenelg standing out prominently from among them. The atmospheric effects are nearly always very beautiful, varying from a dazzling clearness and brilliancy in the morning to the rich colours of glorious sunsets, deepening rapidly into the mellow glowing tones of the evening light.

A great difference has been made to the general, as well as the social, aspect of Mount Lofty and its neighbourhood by this railroad, which was opened in 1883. Innumerable villas have sprung up, and these are dotted about near the station, whilst "The Mount" itself is still, as it has so long been, the well-known summer home of the more wealthy and fashionable members of "society." On leaving the station an ascent is made, but it is not until the main road is crossed in the village of Crafers that "The Mount" proper is reached, when a very steep road leads to the top. All the way up it appears well wooded, but it is with the endless and seldom-varied eucalyptus in its sombre grey-green clothing, with great gaunt stems and straggling branches, covered with rough brown bark. This is most usually seen in a continual state of peeling, which is with a gum-tree the equivalent of shedding the leaves in other trees, the bark hanging down in long and ragged strips, leaving the new and silvery-grey stem quite bare, and strewing the ground underneath with a thick brown carpet. On either side of the road, and especially near the little English church and its parsonage, are masses of the beautiful epacris or native heath, in lovely shades of red and pink and pure white, growing among the gum-trees and the scrub.

There are numerous other little shrubs and plants, such as the white-flowering native box and the fine-leaved ivy-bushes, under the branches of the stately blackwood and the brighter-green native cherry-trees. The not very luscious fruit of the latter has a peculiarity truly antipodean—the stone, covered with a yellow-green skin, is attached to the end and outside of the bright-red elongated little cherry.

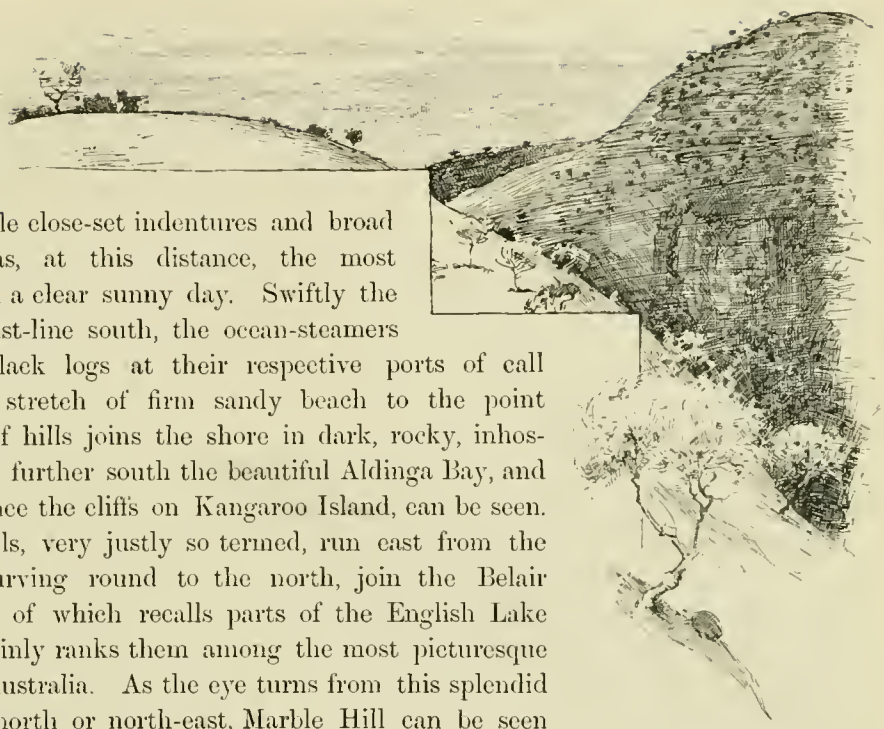
It is just at the beginning of the ridge or saddle-back that the houses of "The Mount" appear. They are built for the easy-going summer country-life in the hills, and prove most wonderfully elastic when occasions arise during the numerous pleasant gatherings in the six-months' season or more. Each has its large garden of fruits and flowers and plants that cannot grow on the plains under the scorching sun of summer. In one at least the slopes are planted with strawberries; rhododendrons and camellias are to be seen in great profusion; a scarlet Virginian-creeper clings to the wall, and in a sheltered nook a passion-fruit plant hides itself. Snow seldom falls upon The Mount, but is occasionally known during a severe winter.

Westward over the sea, or rather the Gulf of St. Vincent, a most extensive view presents itself to the climber who reaches the top. A vast plain opens out, stretching away to the north-west as far as the eye can see, to where the distant Hummocks, a group of hills, rise dimly against the horizon, forming the head of the gulf near Port Wakefield. The plain itself is covered with fields of the "golden grain," only varied by patches of newly-turned earth in richest shades of brown. Nearer, and just below the thickly-wooded north-western spurs, lies Adelaide, square and regular,

intensely white in the noonday glare, with long, straight, Roman-like roads leading from it in all directions, and, close up on every side, the Parklands, reserved for the public for recreation and other purposes—in summer parched enough, but in winter forming a broad belt of green. The river on which the city stands, insignificant though it seems on account of its high banks, looks well where it broadens out into the Torrens Lake. It is sad that a river which looks so well should have so miserable an ending.

WATERFALL AT BURNSIDE.

The course of the Torrens leads down towards the sea, but passes into large swamps called "The Reedbeds," and finds its way to the sea by filtering through the soft sands when the tide is low; and when the tide is high it is able to reach the opening through which vessels make their way to Port Adelaide. The broad estuary that bears ships from Port Adelaide to the gulf assumes the name of the North Arm—so called from its



VIEW FROM MORIALTA.

form. This expanse of gleaming, pale silvery blue water continuously spreading away to the sea, with all its little close-set indentures and broad sandy beaches, has, at this distance, the most charming effect on a clear sunny day. Swiftly the eye follows the coast-line south, the ocean-steamers lying like long black logs at their respective ports of call along that broad stretch of firm sandy beach to the point where the range of hills joins the shore in dark, rocky, inhospitable cliffs. Still further south the beautiful Aldinga Bay, and dimly in the distance the cliffs on Kangaroo Island, can be seen.

The Bald Hills, very justly so termed, run east from the gulf itself, and, curving round to the north, join the Belair Hills, the contour of which recalls parts of the English Lake Country, and certainly ranks them among the most picturesque ranges in South Australia. As the eye turns from this splendid panorama to the north or north-east, Marble Hill can be seen at nearly the same altitude; there is the Governor's summer residence, planned by Sir William Jervois when Governor of South Australia. Also on the north, separated from The Mount proper only by a dip, is Little Mount Lofty, pretty and picturesque, with a road leading round it which joins the Green Hill Road, an important entrance to another part of these hills. Descending the summit, the first object of interest is the large new country-house with a stately tower, owned by Sir Thomas Elder, and built by him entirely out of South Australian materials, with the intention of helping trade in a time of great depression. From this tower another most beautiful view is to be obtained of all the country to the east. The hills are massed together as far as the eye can reach—Mount Barker, twelve miles off, standing out as the highest point, and far beyond it, to the right, a blue line showing where Lake Alexandrina lies, one of the embouchures of the great River Murray. This leads into the Southern Ocean, and is not more than fifty miles away. Just below the tower lies the broad and fertile valley of Piccadilly, full of the neatest of market-gardens, looking extremely pretty and well cared-for, with hundreds of patches of every shade of green. Here and there are a few cottages. Even a road can hardly be discerned, though more than one does lie somewhere down among the tangled hedges of sweetbriar and pink roses—a touch that helps to give the whole picture an English look; but a scene further removed from the fine old London thoroughfare could not well be imagined. There is not even a village; all is green as green can be, owing to the luxury (almost unknown elsewhere in the colony) of a constantly-running stream of spring-water, for in South Australia the greater number of streams leave their beds perfectly

dry during the summer, while sometimes the water can only be found hidden away some feet below the red or yellow sun-baked beds of clay.

Among the many lovely drives and rides to be enjoyed on warm summer afternoons around Mount Lofty, none are so pretty as those diverging on this eastern side, which, on returning, bring one to this broad sweet valley, after emerging from a dense forest of dark gum-trees, with the rosy glow of the setting sun showing up the outline of the dusky mount, or lending colour to that curious, weird sight—a forest of gaunt grey trees seamed and seared by some terrible bush-fire, with blackened stems and withered, contorted branches standing out in all their pitiful hideousness.

The bush-fires which invariably come to intensify the heat of summer are certainly a feature of the country, and therefore deserving of mention. Starting suddenly and unexpectedly—man knows not where nor how—they spread with wonderful rapidity, their approach being heralded, among other things, by the arrival of numberless stupefied beasts, birds, and insects, rendered homeless by the devastating flames and blinding smoke, from which they have miraculously managed to escape. These fires rage for days, and sometimes even weeks—now smouldering ominously, waiting for the least breath of wind to fan them into life, and now bursting forth with redoubled fury, the licking tongues of flame devouring everything before them, and rushing up the narrow gorges with a mighty, terror-striking roar. It is indeed a grand and awe-inspiring spectacle, if one be in a position to view it calmly and indifferently, but when it comes to saving a homestead, and maybe life itself, the whole aspect is changed. All hands—old and young, men and women alike—must turn out and engage in various ways with all their might in the fierce encounter with the dread element, and the effort, to be effectual, requires some organisation. Grasping as quickly and accurately as possible the different points of the situation, the men, placing themselves to the best advantage, await with thick-leaved boughs the approach of the enemy, and, when he has come, fall to and beat with all their strength, being oftentimes completely enveloped in flames, and almost suffocated by the volumes of dense lurid smoke, in face of which they are now and then forced to lie prone on the burning ground until some of it has passed away. They emerge from it terribly scorched and wholly exhausted, but return again and again to the charge like giants, refreshed by immoderate quantities of the strongest tea. This it is usually the part of the women to make and supply incessantly, it being the only beverage which assuages the parching thirst without incapacitating the workers. Should there be sufficient time and warning, a far less dangerous and fatiguing method of dealing with a fire is to light a counter-fire, which, however, need to be closely watched and guarded, and as the two meet, extinction is the natural result; but, unfortunately, in these matters no choice is given, and decision must be made and action taken on the spur of the moment.

A bush-fire by night is often a truly magnificent sight, which requires to be seen to be thoroughly understood and appreciated, reminding one at times of some great "iron centre," with its forests of smoking shafts and glaring furnaces; then, again, appearing what it really is, one vast conflagration, suggestive of regions of torment and torture, or a mighty battle-field, with continual crashing and crackling, as of volleys

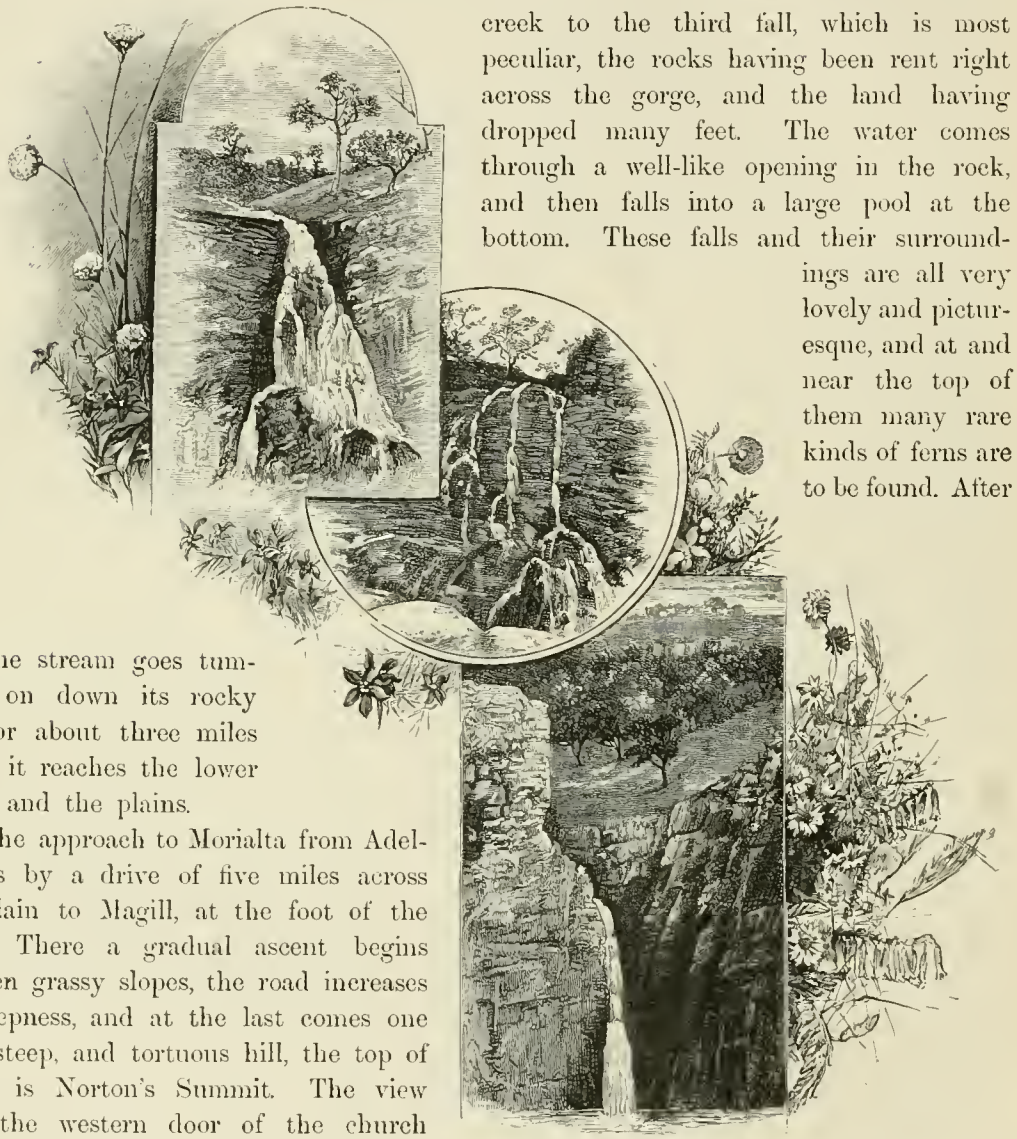
of musketry and booming of artillery, as the monarchs of the woods, burnt through to the core, come thundering to earth, emitting showers of sparks through the clouds of smoke like the bursting of bombs. Of the melancholy scene by day, the Abomination of Desolation alone conveys an idea. Every vestige of life and vegetation gone, only the charred black logs and splintered trunks of the toughest trees remaining, and, strewn all around, a pall of smouldering ashes!

But soon, by some rapid process, mysterious even in this strange land, is effected a magic transformation in the scene. Nature re-asserts herself in the almost visible growth of new foliage on those very trunks and stems which have still managed to retain some of the life-sap, and whose intense blackness shows up in sharp contrast the vivid green of the young leaves of the eucalyptus. With the lack of shrub and undergrowth, a picture is produced at once striking and weird, and, it may be added, specially Australian.

From Mount Lofty to Morialta is a pretty, although not very varied, drive, the road lying rather enclosed among the hills, without any distant views. It is exceedingly rough and steep, and so narrow in one part that sometimes, when two carriages have met, one has had to be backed some distance to a place where they could cross. A short distance below this road, on the right, are the verdant gardens of Piccadilly and Garden Gully, after which the scene on either side of the road is one of almost unvaried bush-country, with one notable exception, however—a forest of the most melancholy-looking trees, tall and gaunt and grey, without a vestige of leaf of any colour. After the Green Hill Road is passed comes Summertown, and not far from it Wraidla, two pretty little villages, and then the gates of Morialta are reached. After driving for a short distance between laurel-hedges the house is seen. It is covered with creepers, passion-flower, tecoma, and ivy. The garden in front is very luxuriant, camellias growing to the size of great shrubs. The orchard is on the east side of the house, and below that is the creek from which the property takes the name of "Morialta," the native word for "ever-flowing." On the west is a vineyard, and amongst the hills near is a piece of flat ground sufficiently extensive for training race-horses. Sheep graze on the land during part of the year, but it is mostly used for horses and cattle. Built in a style well suited to a hot climate, the house has wide cool halls and passages, and contains a small private Roman Catholic chapel. For some years past gold has been found here, and a number of men are to be seen employed in "washing" for the precious metal in the creeks.

Not far from the house, within easy walking distance down Fourth Creek, is the cascade known as Baker's Waterfall. It is very narrow and about eighty feet high, with plenty of water in winter, although nearly dry in summer. All among the rocks, and at the bottom of the fall, ferns and reeds grow luxuriantly, adding greatly to its beauty; on both sides the hills are very precipitous, and many bleached bones bear evidence of the numerous goats and sheep who in their search for water have come to an untimely end. From this it is a stiff walk, or rather scramble, down to the next fall in an adjoining property through which Fourth Creek flows, and only to be accomplished by constantly crossing the stream on the ledges of rock and

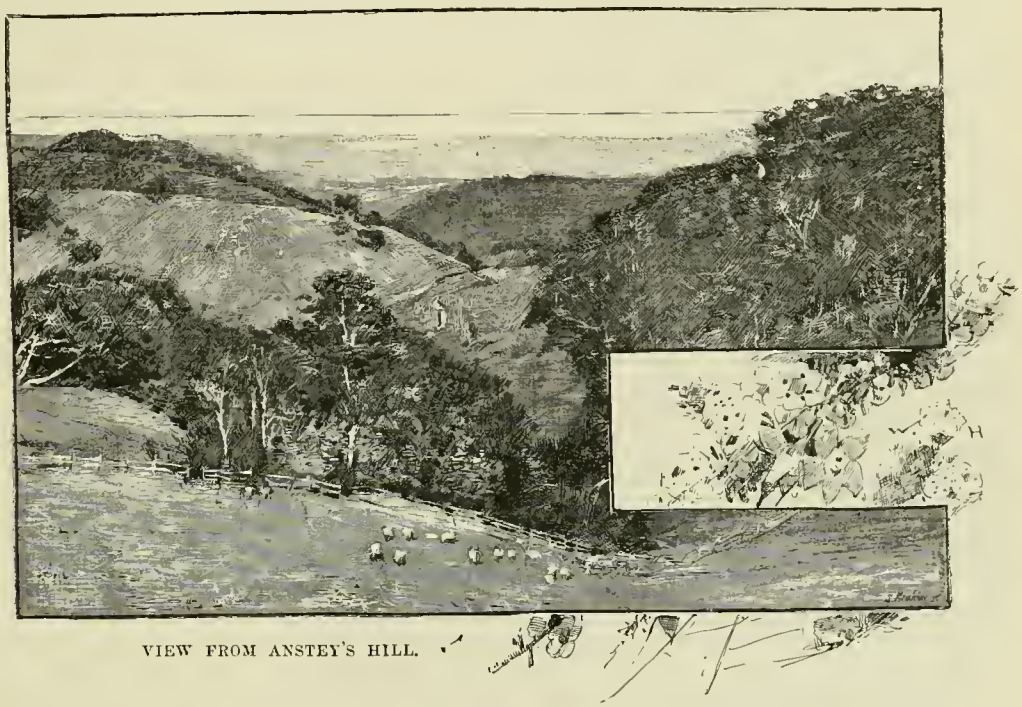
stooping under the scrub-bushes. The second is the largest of these three picturesque falls, the water coming over and falling from step to step, each very steep, until it breaks into numerous cascades; at the foot there are some very fine rocks. It is two miles down the same creek to the third fall, which is most peculiar, the rocks having been rent right across the gorge, and the land having dropped many feet. The water comes through a well-like opening in the rock, and then falls into a large pool at the bottom. These falls and their surroundings are all very lovely and picturesque, and at and near the top of them many rare kinds of ferns are to be found. After this the stream goes tumbling on down its rocky bed for about three miles before it reaches the lower slopes and the plains.



WATERFALLS AT MORIALTA.

The approach to Morialta from Adelaide is by a drive of five miles across the plain to Magill, at the foot of the hills. There a gradual ascent begins between grassy slopes, the road increases in steepness, and at the last comes one long, steep, and tortuous hill, the top of which is Norton's Summit. The view from the western door of the church (which is built in a commanding position looking straight down the valley) is perhaps one of the prettiest near Adelaide. Immediately below the church is the valley, full of market-gardens, with glimpses here and there of the long winding road; beyond, upon the left, the hills, very steep and rocky, come straight down. Among them are some wonderfully high red and black crags overhanging the road, while on the right are more gentle slopes. Between these, looking down across the plains,

lies Adelaide, spread out like a chessboard, its regular streets seeming to form the squares, while beyond these yellow plains is the broad blue Gulf of St. Vincent, and on clear days a faint line showing the land of Yorke's Peninsula on the opposite shore some fifty miles away. Perhaps a more picturesque, though less extensive, view is the one in the sketch, made from a lofty rocky ridge of the western spurs, looking through the end of Morialta Gorge. It shows the contour of these hills and some of their native trees, with the two reservoirs on the plain. It also shows Paradise, a small



VIEW FROM ANSTEY'S HILL.

village which has given its name to the surrounding district, while the curious mouth of the Port Creek or River, on which Port Adelaide is built, is to be seen.

A few miles further north, along the same range of hills as Morialta, is Highercombe, a fine property belonging to Sir R. D. Ross. The original proprietor was a Mr. Anstey, hence the name of Anstey's Hill, the steepest and last part of the road. Here is another splendid panoramic view of plains and sea as far as the eye can reach, from Aldinga Bay to the mouth of the Wakefield River. These hills are quite remarkable for their many lovely shades of blue; in certain weather they are to be seen as through a blue veil. But the blueness is especially noticeable in the distant views, in the wonderfully cloudless skies, in the sea-water (whether rough or calm), and from the thickly-wooded ranges down to the misty valleys, varying from the very palest tone to dark slate or even violet. Indeed, on some of the scorching summer afternoons there comes over the parched hillsides, which then look so bare and arid, the same violet shade or reddish-purple that is often to be seen on the shores or cliffs of Arabia.

WELLINGTON TO NAPIER BY COACH.

Travelling, Past and Present—Bush Roads—The Wairarapa Plains—The "Seventy Miles Bush"—The Manawatu Gorge—New Zealand Bush—Desecration.

MR. RUSKIN has often expressed disapproval of many things among the characteristic developments of modern times, and among the objects of his disapproval the mechanical contrivances by which steam is made to subserve the purposes of industrial production are not the least. He has somewhere described a railway journey as not to be called travelling, but being made a parcel of, and sent to one's destination. His memory carries him back to the delightful journeys of his boyhood in the old coaching days. New Zealand is still in her coaching days, and the traveller who wishes to visit the finest portions of the colony has not even the chance offered him of being made a parcel of, he has no alternative but to undergo the delight of being jolted and jostled in joint and limb over some hundreds of miles of "road." I put the latter word in commas for the benefit of home readers, for those who would form a mental picture of a colonial bush-road must utterly divest their minds of all preconceived ideas derived from experience of the Queen's highways and the country lanes which interlace with them. A colonial bush road for the most part consists of a track through the forest, from which the timber and scrub has been cleared away, and sufficiently wide to admit of a "mob" of cattle being driven along it. Over level country this clearing away of the bush appears to have constituted the whole process of making the road: it is then considered ready for use, and is forthwith used by cattle, mail-coach, buggy, and dray, until, as one might suppose, the ruts are often not unlike small ditches.

Of course, where the road has to surmount or circumvent a high pass, threading its way by cliffs and gullies, the work of constructing the road has been a larger undertaking; it has called for engineering skill, and there has been a certain amount of metalling done; done, however, many years ago, and left untended and unmended to the wear and tear of twenty or thirty years. These parts of the road are phenomenal, and nothing could have made me believe, before seeing it actually done, that flesh and blood of horse and man could trot down these broken ways at a flying speed, as if no vast depths of empty air stretched down from the shelving edge, the driver as calm and genial as if he were crossing Salisbury Plain instead of skirting the confines of eternity along a mountain pass. But there is a great charm about this way of travelling, nevertheless; certainly it is preferable to going by rail. You catch a feeling of exhilaration even from your horses—strong, splendidly broken in, and exulting in eager enjoyment of the physical exertion, the noblest trait of a young horse. And then you do really see something of the wayside—the time between starting and arriving is not a blank, or worse than a blank, a mere blurr of houses, fields, and trees, jumbled into one formless image of nothing in particular, and accompanied by an unintermitting roar of rattling iron wheels. The pleasant succession of new sights and new points of view

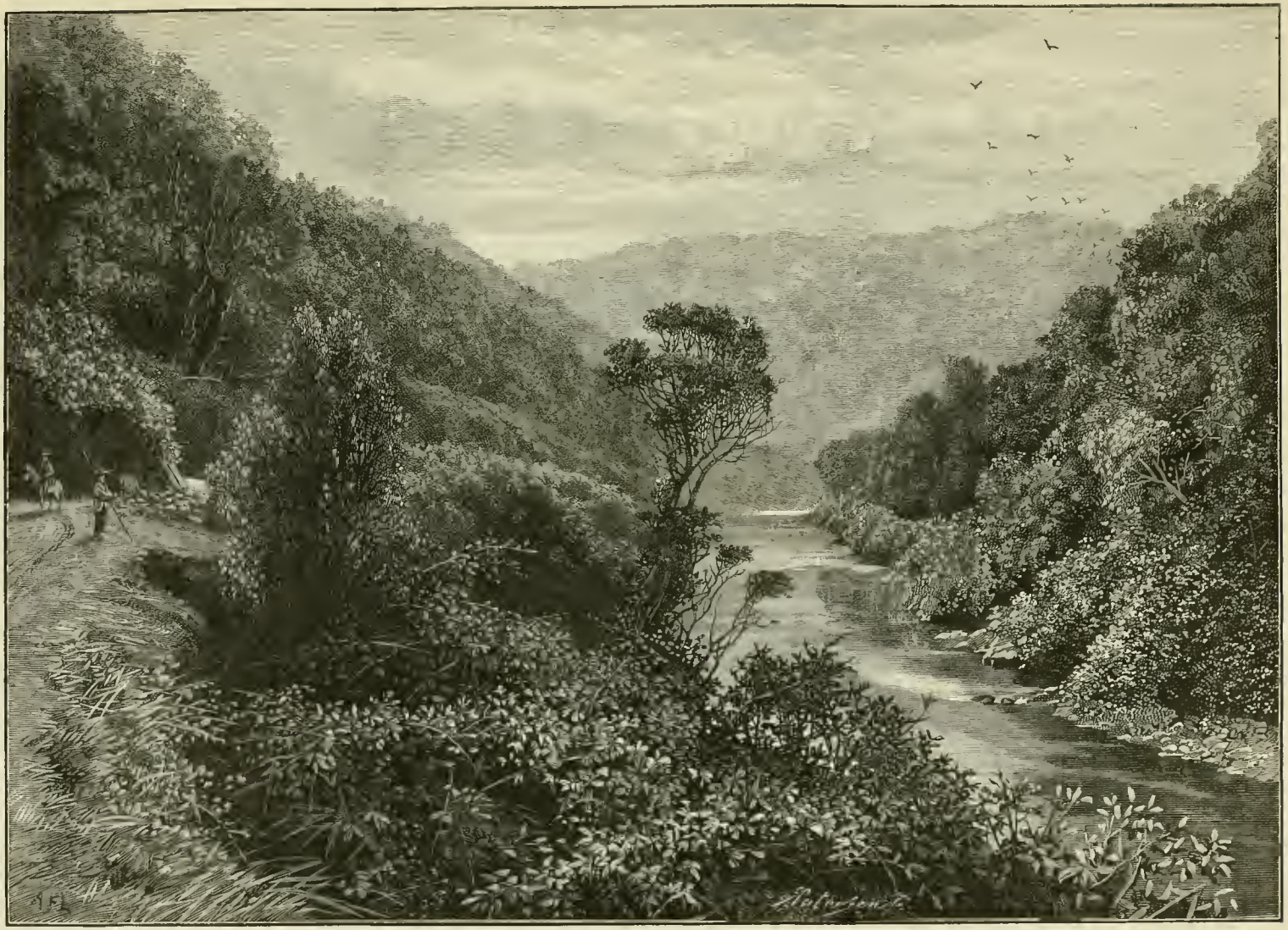
not too rapidly appearing and disappearing helps further to keep your mind on the alert, and so lessen the nervous distress which some people naturally experience when the coach seems to overhang the dizzy precipice.

There are two great coach drives in New Zealand—one in South Island between Springfield on the Canterbury Plains and the gold-field towns, Hokitika and Greymouth of Westland, the other in North Island between Wellington, the present seat of the Colonial Government, and the old capital, Auckland. It is this latter drive of which we are about to speak. The journey commences—we start from the southern end—with a few hours' railway ride between Wellington and Mungamahoe. This is, of course, not part of the coach drive, but it is rather a remarkable piece of road, and deserves a short passing notice. At first the train skirts along the sea-shore, so very close to the water that the waves break against the stone basement of the road; after a while it rises, following by a circuitous, ascending track, the windings of the hillside, and overlooking a rich stretch of mellow, well-watered, lush pasture land, reaching out to where the distant wooded hills make an encircling shelter against the fury of the prevailing winds. It must always be a pleasure to anyone travelling northwards from Wellington, when he first notices the timber upon the hills, for nothing can be more depressingly gloomy in the way of scenery than the unsightly heaps of scorched clay which seems the most appropriate description of the hills immediately surrounding the capital. Once beyond this outer range the scenery changes, at first some of the distant slopes are seen to be seamed with dark lines of foliage, further on the forest deepens, and the hills are clothed

IN THE "SEVENTY MILES BUSH."

from shoulder to foot with a garment of Nature's weaving, as it were, which through the pale mist showed like a cloak of green and purple velvet. On the summit of Rimutaka the railway is at a height of 2,390 feet; but the most interesting point, perhaps, in respect of engineering at least, is its sudden descent from Kaitoka to Cross Creek on the plain: this place is popularly called Siberia, on account of the fury of its frequent north-west winds, which did on one occasion, about eight years ago, actually blow the train off the lines, killing several passengers. At Cross Creek we enter the rich farm country of the Wairarapa Plains, and a little way beyond the lake of that name is visible, the country all round for many miles only less level than the lake itself. The train does not accomplish this journey at express speed, and I remember very well the scene which lay about us as we moved away from the superb mountain gorges out on to the open plain just as the sun was drawing near its setting. The sky had by this time become somewhat overcast, and here and there a thin veil of rain drooped from the lowering clouds. The landscape was exquisite; the vivid freshness of the wet green scrub against the deep sombre purple of the mountain gorges; wreaths of grey mist concealed the summits of the hills, and gradually stole lower down the wooded slopes, the whole scene wearing an aspect of solemn grandeur. Looking the other way there was the lake, a long level line of shivering silver light, the hills beyond its further shore just dimly visible through the skirts of the drifting rain clouds. But for a few moments the sombre scene was rendered very beautiful indeed by a break in the lower reach of clouds above the water, through which a streak of soft pink sky was visible, in colour like the inside of some thin transparent shell, and this faint evening pink the quivering ripples underneath took up and mingled with their own pale silver. Nothing could have been more impressive than this remarkable blending of natural features so unlike under the fair subdued aspect of the twilight—the hills, the wide expanse of plain, the lake, the canopy of cloud, and the rosy rift to westward. The fact that we are able to speak of the evening on the Wairarapa shows that we were taking our time. It would have been possible to leave Wellington earlier and go right on by the coach on the same day. We preferred staying the night at Masterton, and taking up the coach next day for the "seventy mile bush" at Mungamahoe, a few miles further on. It is so very easy to crowd too much travelling into one day, and then afterwards regret a vacant memory.

Leaving Mungamahoe, the coach almost at once plunges into the densest bush, the "seventy miles bush," as it is called, the coach track having had to be cut through it for seventy miles, though I was assured that the forest extended unbroken for a hundred miles; and through this vast wilderness of leaf and timber only two roads have to the present date been made, namely, this road from Mungamahoe, and another which comes across from Palmerston on the west coast, through the Manawatu gorge, and joins the "seventy mile" road at Woodville. Here the railway now meets the coach road, so that the drive has been considerably shortened from what it once was, though what remains is very enjoyable indeed. Almost for forty miles without a break the green forest walls of living trellis-work rise up on either hand, and yet this never becomes



THE MANAWATU GORGE.

tedious—the sweet freshness of the leafage, the exquisite grace of bough and frond, and the long festoons of the creepers, the feeling of immensity which so vast a track of pathless solitude suggests, the beauty and the strangeness of it prevent the hours from growing monotonous. It is quite a typical New Zealand "bush," and it is, certainly, very much more beautiful than the wide gum forests of Australia. With the exception of the Kauri and the Nekau Palm, nearly every tree which belongs to the colony grows in the "seventy mile bush" of Wellington. The "Rimu," or red pine, is perhaps the commonest, and is very valuable for its timber; white pine, "kahikatea," is a very beautiful tree, and droops its dark feathery foliage in a way which recalls the graceful branches of the English elm tree. But the foliage of many of the large trees is quite destroyed by the crimson flowering rata, the king of parasites, which having raised itself into the upper air by the aid of some unhappy pine, insinuates its fatal coils about its patron until it has absorbed trunk and branch into itself, and so gathered sufficient strength to stand unaided like the chief of forest trees flaunting in crimson splendour.

The dense undergrowth of fern and tangle is one of the features which make the New Zealand forests so beautiful—the fuchsias, briar, convolvulus, and honeysuckle, which gather in bushy clusters just as do their cousins in the old country. I call these plants by the names of their English equivalents, because I rather suspect a list of strange words from the colonial vernacular botany would not convey a very real impression to readers of these chapters in England. Koninny, raupo, toi-toi, supple-jack, thousand-jacket, and the like, are names of things known well enough to the inhabitants of Napier and Taranaki, but to the average stay-at-home Englishman they are nouns which only vexatiously illustrate the difference between names and things. Still, it is as well to mention these, as well as the palm and fern trees and the exquisite toi-toi grass, with its white plume upon the tall slender stem, like the grass of the American pampas; they bring to mind how entirely unlike it all is to anything we can see in the Old World. Wild, however, as the country is, at two points Solitude has been dispossessed of her ancient reign by the settlement of homesteads in small townships. At Ekatahunga a substantial hot meal, including (as an alternative for the inevitable tea) bottles of Bass's ale! And again some hours later another short stay is Pahiatua. Soon after leaving Pahiatua the road crossed the river Kakákahi once or twice, the open views up and down its stony shallow reaches making a pleasant change of scenery. Lastly, a short while before reaching the last stage of the drive at Woodville we pass over one of the higher reaches of the Manawatu, a splendid river which lower down has formed for itself a deep ravine between green-canopied cliffs, making one of the finest river gorges in the world.

The next morning I found that there would be abundance of time to drive to the further end of the Manawatu Gorge, and walk back to Woodville before the train for Napier left. And I was abundantly repaid by using my opportunity of visiting this fair corner of the world, which Nature has kept for countless ages as her own secret. The road through the gorge is cut along the steep river cliff; the river flows, deep, slow, and transparently clear below—so clear is the blue water that the rocky bed is

visible even where it is deepest. The finest view is just before the road enters the gorge itself; at this point the river makes a sudden swerve round to the north, and a steep rock rises up from the hollow of the bend to the level of the road. From this vantage ground the view is open up and down the stream. Beyond the upper reach we look across a long stretch of level country, dark with foliage, but not monotonous, for between the bank of the river and the forests the floods have stripped away all taller kinds of growth, and left a rough dishevelled tract of swamp, where the grass plumes and the bright feathery discs of fern make a pleasant show among the brown and purple of the manuka scrub. Beyond the forest the eastern ranges close in the view, receding in ever fairer, fainter hue, to where, in the furthest distance, the last soft wavy curve is drawn against the pale sky.

Within the gorge itself one cannot but feel vexed at the desecration which is being done by the coarse mechanical hand of modern steam civilisation. A railway is being constructed along the opposite cliff at just the same height above the river as the coach road, and the exquisite tapestry-work of delicate foliage with which the slopes have been covered hitherto is being stripped away, leaving the bare unsightly soil. It is as if a man should take a palette-knife, and while the colour was still moist, mischievously blurr the centre of some great master's landscape. Indeed, the presence of "civilised" man in these new countries has not yet, for the most part, added at all to the beauty of the scenery. Men have come in, burning, stripping, desolating,

"Huzzing and maäzing the blessed fields with the devil's oän teäm;"

they have erected trumpery temporary structures for temporary purposes, and the result is ugly disfigurement of Nature everywhere. This will not always be so; in time the presence of man upon the soil will add a charm and make the country far more beautiful than it would ever be without them. But this will not be till in the cities flimsy structures of wooden planks and galvanised iron are replaced by solid work in brick and stone; while in the "bush" the farm life must develop itself upon a better economic basis, and settled homesteads must gather bright meadows and cornlands about them. Moreover, it must not be thought that the railway has or can utterly obliterate the handiwork of Nature in the Manawatu Gorge. The steep summits of the cliffs still wear their bushy crowns, and lead on the imagination to the vast solitudes of forest wilderness which lie beyond these ragged outskirts; for scores of miles beyond this feathery fringe of fern and palm and swaying festoon of orchids and convolvulus, there reigns a solitude never yet broken by the advance of men—a solitude more still than very silence; a vast virgin wilderness, lonely, trackless, silent-hearted. And yet, while we stand there meditating upon the new suggestions arising from the place, and listening, perhaps, to the scream of the ka-ka, or the mellow notes of the native piping-crow, about our feet on the road-side are clusters of yellow hawkweed, and purple self-heal, and great rough thistle burrs from the far north-west, and all along the way the air is heavy with the scent of the sweetbriar, perhaps all the sweeter to me from a subtle sense of exile shared with this Surrey-loving thorn.

THE HAWKESBURY

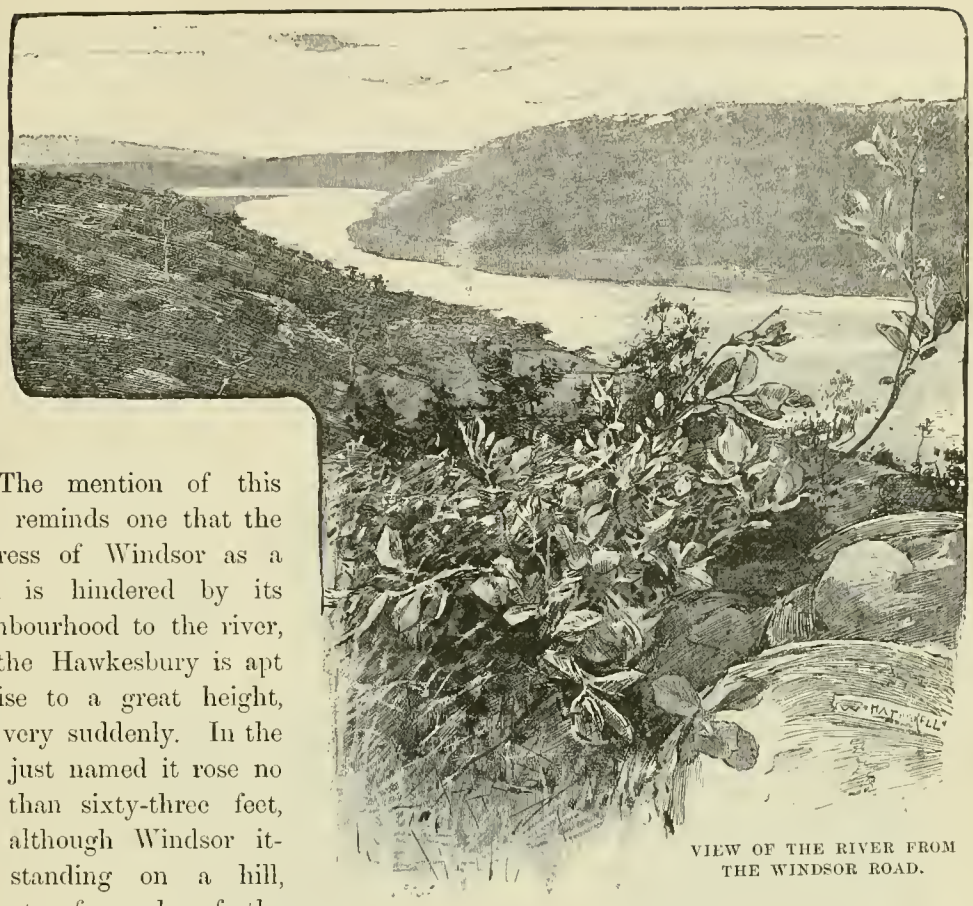
Its Course—Windsor—Broken Bay—Lion Island—Ways and Means—An Early Start—The Mouth—Nature's Own Scenery—"Sentry Box Reach"—Wiseman's Ferry—Home Again.

THE head-waters of the Hawkesbury rise on the Pacific slope of the Great Dividing Range of New South Wales. The stream on its first appearance is known as the Wollondilly, and under that name it passes the little city of Goulburn, which lies more than a hundred miles to the south-west of Sydney. Its first affluent is the Cox, which comes from the region of the Jenolan Caves. Further down it receives the Nepean, and by this name the united river, for part of its course, is known. Under this name it passes by Penrith, which lies at the feet of the "Blue Mountains," as the hills of the Dividing Range at this point are called; and at Penrith it is crossed by the Great Western Railway.

WINDSOR CHURCH.

Further down still it receives the waters of the Grose, which have been already swelled by the stream which falls over "Govett's Leap." Not far from the junction of the Grose are the Kurrajong Heights and a "Vale of Avoca." Just above, near, but not quite on, the river, lies the little town of Richmond. From the point of junction onwards the river is known as the Hawkesbury. Two larger affluents join it further down, the Colo and the Macdonald, the latter flowing in on the north side, near Wiseman's Ferry.

A little below Richmond, on the same side of the river, lies Windsor, the town which is most closely associated with the Hawkesbury. For a new country, Windsor is quite an old town; and it looks old. Its church, St. Matthew's, a double cube basilica, with an apse, may, in one sense, claim to be the oldest ecclesiastical building in Australia. Its foundation was laid before that of St. James's, in Sydney, although St. James's was finished first. It was a refuge for many homeless families during the great flood of 1867.



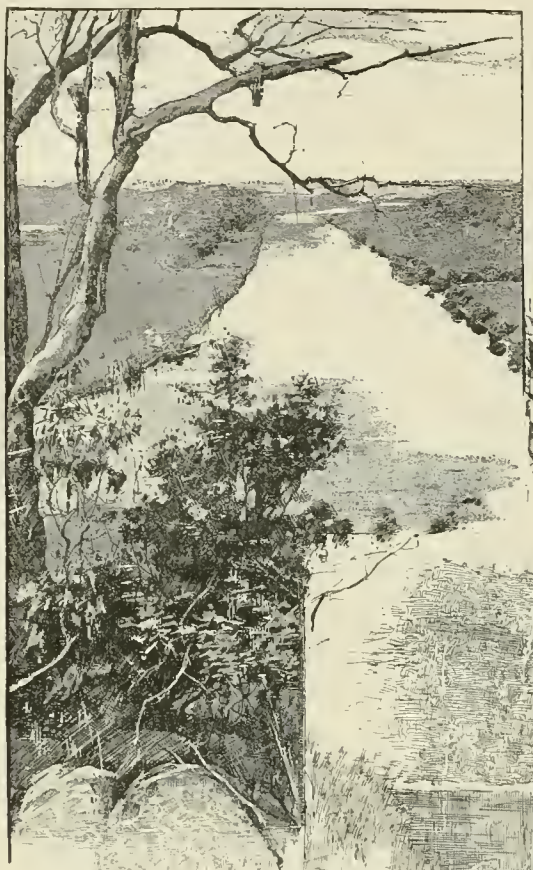
VIEW OF THE RIVER FROM THE WINDSOR ROAD.

The mention of this flood reminds one that the progress of Windsor as a town is hindered by its neighbourhood to the river, for the Hawkesbury is apt to rise to a great height, and very suddenly. In the year just named it rose no less than sixty-three feet, and although Windsor itself, standing on a hill, is out of reach of the floods, the country all round it on such occasions is covered with the rising waters.

From Goulburn to Wiseman's Ferry the trend of the river is rather towards the north-east, nearly parallel to the Blue Mountains. From Wiseman's Ferry onward it runs mainly east, but winds very much throughout its course, and heads to almost every point of the compass in turn. It is the longest of all the rivers on the Pacific slope of the Dividing Range, its whole course under its various names being about 330 miles, and the area drained is nearly 9,000 square miles.

The Hawkesbury flows into the Pacific Ocean by Broken Bay, which lies less than twenty miles north of Sydney Harbour. At Peat's Ferry, about ten miles above its mouth, it attains to a breadth of 1,100 feet, and not far from this point it will shortly be crossed by the Northern Railway. Broken Bay consists of three divisions, the northern, central, and southern. The southern division of it stretches away towards Sydney, and is called Pittwater. By the shores of Pittwater lies the road from Sydney to the Hawkesbury, useful to those travellers who wish to see the lower part of the river first, and yet to escape the ocean passage from Sydney Harbour. The northern division is called Brisbane Water. It winds for several miles among densely-wooded hills, reminding one sometimes of the Tasmanian Tamar between Launceston and the

Straits, and sometimes giving a hint of what Sydney Harbour must have been before it was crowded with ships, and before villas, gardens, fortifications, and groves of European trees were to be seen along its shores. At the head of Brisbane Water lies the village of Gosford.



SACKVILLE REACH.

Between these two arms of the bay is the mouth of the Hawkesbury. It is marked by an island of a very striking form, which is known by various names. The name which is given it in the maps of the Survey Office is, we believe, "Mount Elliott." But it is known also as "Lion Island," and indeed it looks quite like a gigantic lion crouching at the entrance of the river. We are here mainly concerned with the river between Lion Island and Windsor. The characteristic part of it does not indeed extend quite as far upward as Windsor. Sackville Reach, which is twenty-two miles from Windsor by the river and ten by land, is at present the head of the navigation, and the alluvial plains, which bound the river at this point, stretch downward a little further still. But out of the ninety miles or so from the mouth

THE MACDONALD RIVER.

of the river to the head of the navigation, there are more than eighty which present an unbroken series of beautiful reaches of mountain, wood, and water, which it is a delight not only to see but even to remember and to describe.

One should know before visiting the Hawkesbury what sort of beauty to expect. All perfect beauty is awful, but in some kinds of beauty the awfulness is nearly all. Such is the beauty of rugged Alpine scenery and of wild and precipitous ocean beaches. But there is a sort of beauty which does not reveal its awfulness until it has charmed you first, and only with the last rivet of the charm comes the sense of awe. You are taken captive, it is true, but first you have learned to love the captor.

The latter kind of beauty is the beauty of the Hawkesbury. It is the absolute beauty of nature. There are scarce any associations to heighten, or to vary, it maybe to break, the charm. For miles and miles there are none at all. There is nature alone, lifeless nature, as we may say. For miles and miles you see no sign of human habitation, past or present. For miles and miles you see and hear no bird. There is nothing but the sky, the hills, the water, and the wood—nothing but perfect beauty. "Lifeless nature;" and yet, perhaps, one never feels nearer the very fountain of life than amidst such scenery.

One ought to deliberate well on the best method of making the tour of the river. The easiest way is not always the best way. There can be no doubt that if you wish to visit the Hawkesbury to the best advantage, you will charter a steam yacht, as small as is consistent with comfort, and secure an engineer who knows both his work and the river. You will provision your yacht for about ten days, and in such a style as to be as little dependent as possible on the accidents of cookery. There ought to be next to nothing to make ready but a little boiling water for tea. Preserved meats, vegetables, and milk, with fruit and biscuits, will supply the table. There ought to be a tent for camping on shore when desirable, and a small boat that can be pulled easily by one man. So provided, you may, if the weather serve, enjoy the beauties of the river to the very best advantage. One warning we offer without hesitation. Do not go from Windsor downwards until you have gone from Lion Island upwards. If you do not shrink from the ocean highway, go by all means from Sydney Harbour to Broken Bay. The entrance of Broken Bay is very well worth seeing, and makes a good introduction to the beautiful river. But if you fear sea-sickness, then go from Sydney to Manly, and from Manly to Newport on the Pittwater, and from that point up the river. Your yacht may lie at Newport until the weather be settled, and you can reach it from Sydney in a few hours.

But such arrangements as this of the yacht require time, and, above all, money, and there must be other ways of seeing the Hawkesbury, or most of us would never see it. There are the excursion boats which run pretty nearly every week during the season. These take the route by Manly and the Pittwater. But one should not be satisfied with an excursion boat, except as a last resort, for this is an institution which is as little as possible in keeping with such scenes as the Hawkesbury presents, and with such feelings as those scenes excite. Besides, if you travel by the excursion boat, you do not go both up and down the river; you go one way by Windsor and the railway.

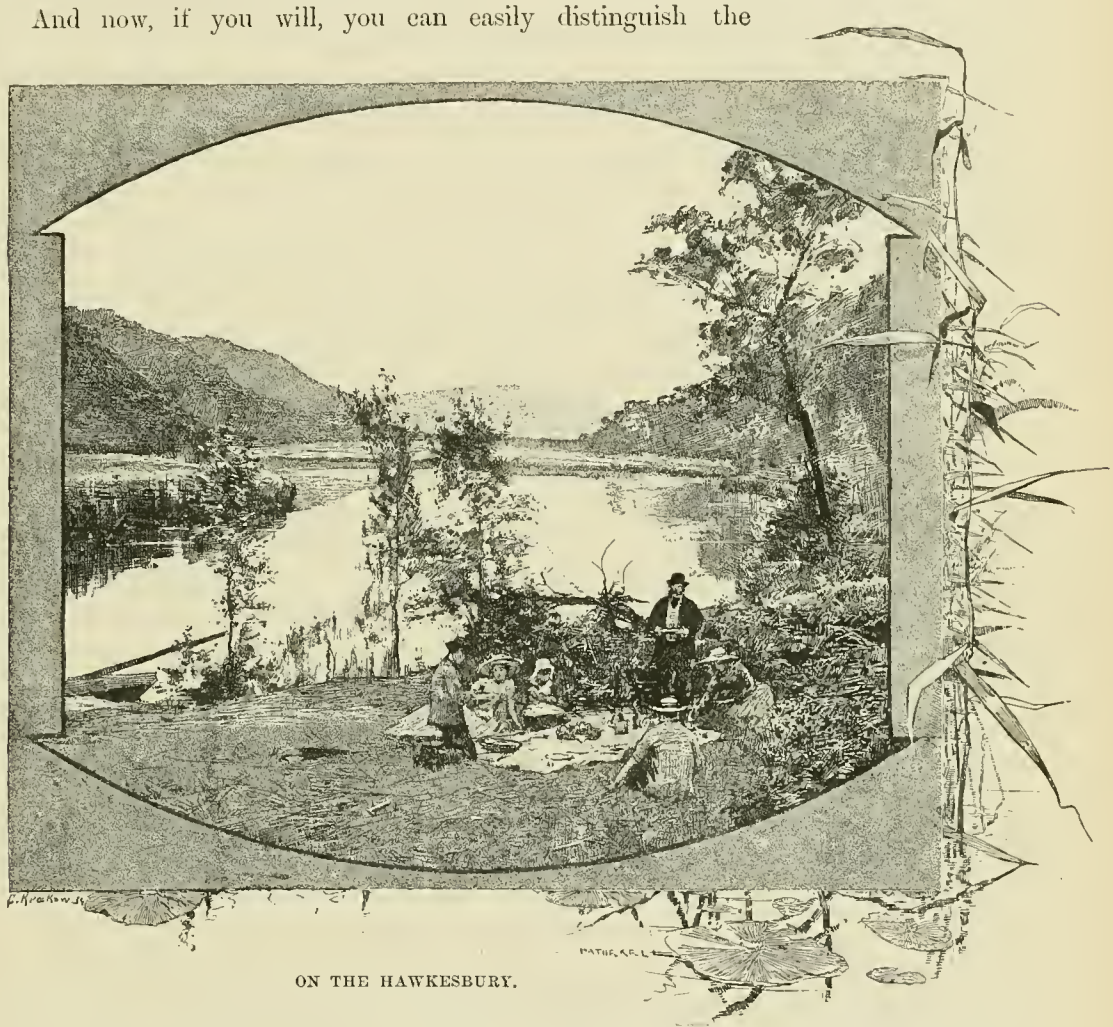
Far better is it to go by one of the cargo boats. The cargo boats do not care about you, for passenger trade is of next to no account to them, but they will take you for a trifling consideration. They will not provide for you, but if you carry a well-appointed lunch-basket, you will need nothing more for two days, and so you will be more independent and very much less hurried. You will not only go both up the river and down, but will see more of the life of the river, for after half a day's travelling through silent and inanimate nature you begin to come upon signs of life. Wiseman's Ferry is about fifty miles from Broken Bay, and even before you come to the Ferry you begin to see settlements here and there along the banks, and after you pass it they become very frequent. The boats call at the little rustic piers along the shore, and land supplies from Sydney: tea and sugar and flour, iron wire and timber. On the return trip they take in cases of oranges, and eggs, and pumpkins, and other farm and orchard produce, and even, at certain seasons, wild flowers for the Sydney market. If your boat goes on to Sackville Reach, as it usually does, you will easily get lodging for the night at a country inn; if not, you may be fortunate enough to find a resting-place with some one of the settlers along the river, and in that case your bed will be as clean and comfortable as in the best Sydney hotel. If it be warm summer weather, and if health permit, you will perhaps choose to go ashore with rug, top-coat, and pipe, and camp in the wood; your bath will be near at hand in the morning. When morning comes, you will be glad to think that you did not have to hurry home by rail the night before, but that you have the length of the beautiful river to pass over at least once again; you will be the whole of one day more upon it. If there is but a light cargo for the return voyage you may be back by eleven o'clock at night; if the cargo is much and the calls many, it may be three o'clock in the morning before you land in Sydney.

At seven in the morning, after an early breakfast, we take our place in the boat at King Street Wharf, or perhaps we find it more convenient to wait at the wharf on Circular Quay, where it calls about half an hour later. We steam down Sydney Harbour, not without many a look at its well-known beauties, and soon we are outside the Heads, and as we look from the ocean at the pretty village of Manly, we admit that Manly, at any rate, is improved, that it is larger and prettier and every way better-looking than when we saw it last. And now, if there is anything of a swell from the Pacific, we are willing to admit also that not only the yachtsmen, but even the excursionists, have a temporary advantage over us; and as our little steamer plunges through the swell we begin for the moment to wish that we were driving along the road to Newport, or lying in the yacht under the shelter of Barrenjoey, at the mouth of Pittwater.

But courage!—there is Barrenjoey lying clear upon the northern horizon, and we shall soon be there, for our steamer can on occasion do its ten or eleven knots an hour, though it is a rough-and-tumble little craft enough. So by-and-by we turn our backs on the Pacific, keeping Barrenjoey to our left, and a fine bold bluff it is, with a lighthouse near the top. As soon as we pass it we are in still water, and as soon as we are in still water we get hungry again. And now we shall have time for a

hurried repast before we are fairly within the river. So we turn to our lunch-baskets and get some hot water from the galley, and, what with cold tongue and biscuits, and oranges and bananas and tea, do very well indeed. And just as we come up to Mount Elliott or Lion Island our pipes are lit.

There it lies at the entrance, like a monster of the primitive world turned into stone. And now, if you will, you can easily distinguish the



ON THE HAWKESBURY.

traveller who has already been to the Hawkesbury from him who has never been there. The latter eagerly discusses the strange figure before him, and finds in it many weird similitudes; the other is quite silent, and wears an abstracted and expectant air. You see that he has already put out his pipe; he knows what is coming—the charm of the river is even now upon him. His companion smokes away still, only somewhat more quickly, and in the intervals of his talk.

But see now, he, too, has quite suddenly dropped his smoking implement, and a change has passed over his face. His eyes are almost fixed, but there is light in them; his lips are parted slightly, but no word escapes them. For we have just now made a

short turn, and the land has closed in behind us, and we are fairly in the river. Three-quarters of a mile wide it is at this point (more or less), yet it seems not nearly so much, so high and so steep are the banks. These are clad with foliage right to the water's edge—foliage not of the neutral tint so common in Australia, nor deformed by long, bare trunks of trees: foliage fresh and bright and varied. Here is a hill rising straight out of the water for several hundred feet; there, with a narrow valley between, is another, sloping gently to the river's edge. Forward, perhaps a mile off, rises another steep hill, with the sunshine resting on it. Straight up, also, this one rises from the water, and the steamer seems to be running right upon it; but just as we approach within an easy stone's-throw of the land she turns and turns again, and the land once more closes behind you, and you come upon another view of the same character, but with all the features of it slightly varied—steep hills rising from the river, and bright foliage coming down to the water, and the stream here and there giving back the sunshine, but mostly darkened by the shadows of the trees and mountains. Thus every few minutes the whole of the picture that you have been gazing upon is lost to your view, and then a turn of the boat discloses a new picture, so like the last as to keep up the sense of unity, and yet so unlike as to give to the succession of scenes the charm of perpetual variety.

Travellers assure us that no river scenery, whether in Europe or in America, excels that of the Hawkesbury for beauty. Mr. Anthony Trollope, as we all know, has gone so far as to say that it stands first of all, even the Rhine and the Upper Mississippi not being excepted. In one respect certainly its character is wholly different from that of the Rhine—that is to say, in its loneliness and almost oppressive silence, and in the complete absence of any disturbing element. The castles, towns, and fortresses of the Rhine are suggestive of so many historic and romantic associations that the thought of the traveller can hardly ever rest absolutely upon Nature. The woods and hills and waters are peopled for him with shades of heroes and paladins, of knights and ladies, who have been passing and re-passing through those regions, in fable and in fact, for a thousand years and more. But on the Hawkesbury there is no history and no romance. You are face to face with Nature in her most perfect aspect, and alone with her. And so Nature tells you her tale with more completeness than if it were interrupted frequently by man's more stirring story.

Have any of our readers ever wandered to the far west of Ireland in search of the beautiful? There is a lake in Mayo, very near the upper part of the Killery Harbour, which there separates that county from Galway; it is called Dhuloch, or sometimes Loch Dhu. Either name signifies the Black Lake. It is, one might guess, about a mile and a half in length. It has the steep and high banks and the varied foliage of the Hawkesbury; it has, from some points of view at least, the same silence and loneliness. You may see (or some years ago you might have seen) Nature there in as absolute a state as on the Hawkesbury. Suppose, now, fifty or sixty of the Black Lakes, with some perpetual variety of detail, strung on one to another in a continued series, and at all sorts of angles, and you have a tolerable conception of the Hawkesbury.

As we pass up the river we come, it may be, upon our friends the yachtsmen,

and we see at once the great advantage which they have over us. For their yacht is moored to a tree in one of the loveliest reaches that we have yet seen, and their little boat, rowed by one of them, is moving slowly to the opposite bank, which is one of the steepest that we have passed; and half-way up a sloping hill to the right we can see another of them, and his purpose is evident, for our field-glass shows us, even at this distance, a remarkable flower near him, which we learn more about by-and-by. But we have to pass on quickly, and soon we find ourselves in what is perhaps the loveliest reach we have yet seen, which they call "Sentry-box Reach," from a great squarish mass of rock which stands upon one of the hills.

After hours of stillness and silence, broken only by the gasping of our little steamer, we begin to come upon some houses and gardens, orange-groves and orchards. And, stopping to land some timber at such a settlement, we get a close view of another of those flowers, one of which had attracted the notice of the tourist on the hill. We see from the river what looks like a pair of long lily-stems, with a large flower, like a peony, on the top of each. But when we come on shore and stand beside the stems, we find that they are twelve and sixteen feet high, and that the flower on the larger of the two is nearly twice the size of a man's head. Indeed, it is not so much a flower as a great cluster of blossoms. They call it the "gigantic lily."

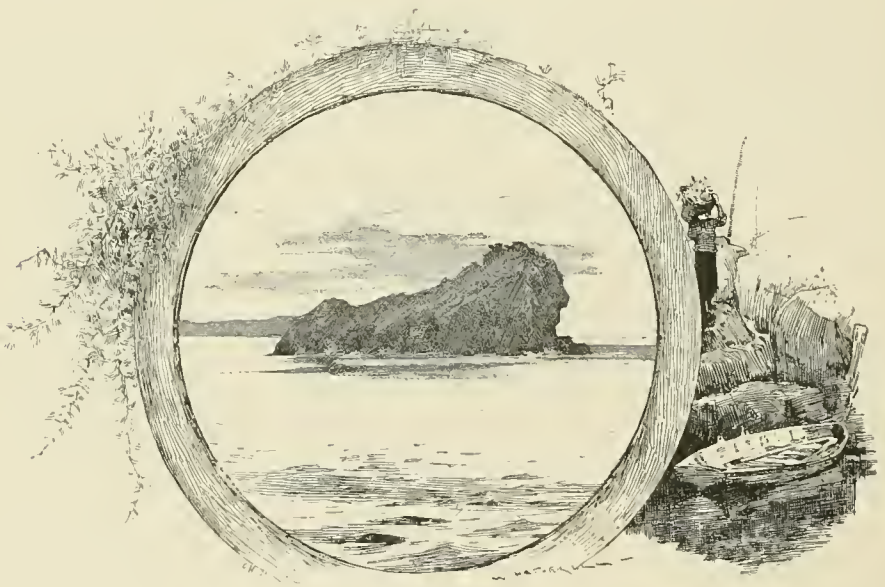
If we have many calls to make, it will be past four o'clock before we reach Wiseman's Ferry. The scenery here in its broad characteristics is the same as that which has been described. But you begin to feel that you are again within the outposts of civilisation. A road winds down the mountain to the ferry, and again across the river you trace it winding up the precipitous banks and along the ridges of the hill, and you see the telegraph-wire hanging high in the air, like a thread of a spider's web. And there are perhaps half-a-dozen houses, and the ruined walls of an old church.

If we have had an exceptionally early start, not many calls, and very calm weather, we may reach the ferry while our friends the excursionists are at dinner there, and, in that case, they will pass us a little farther up, while we unload some cargo. Most likely, however, we shall see nothing of them. But we shall meet their boat near Sackville Reach on its return homeward, they themselves going back by railway from Windsor to Sydney.

If we have chosen, as one ought to choose, if possible, September or April for our trip, evening will begin to fall upon us not very long after we have passed the ferry, but if we have happened on the time of the full moon, the night will only show us the river in another phase of beauty. And on the return we shall see by daylight what we are now seeing by moonlight, and we shall see by moonlight what we have been seeing by daylight. The passage down the river is apt to take longer than the passage up. The boat's load, although perhaps not greater, is made up of smaller lots, and so we have to make more calls, and the modes of lading are so primitive that there is much delay. Sometimes you lie lazily at the stern of the boat; you see that she is moored or at anchor; a great pyramid of pumpkins is piled on the bank, and a row of men are standing between the pumpkins and the hold of the ship, one of them being on the plank which reaches from the vessel to the shore; one picks up a

pumpkin and throws it to the next, and the next to the next, and so on, until the last man throws it into the hold. The slow, sleepy motion of the men's arms and the pumpkins makes you close your eyes. By-and-by you open them, taking no note of time. But there still you see the rhythmic movement of the men and the pumpkins. "What is it?" you wonder sleepily; "some game of goblins most likely." But still in the background of the picture you see the high, steep hills, the forest and the river, and you don't know whether you are sleeping or waking, and you don't care.

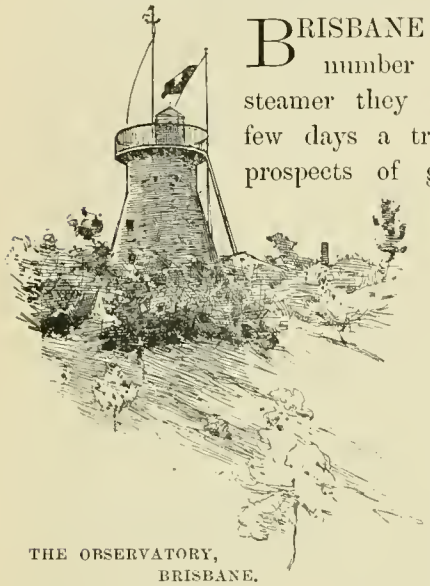
By-and-by the lading is done, and the steamer moves again, and you are broad awake. And so on down the river from reach to reach, with more or less of life and beauty, until you have passed Wiseman's Ferry once more. Then down into the still silent beauty of the lower river. And as you leave the river you see the moonlight shining upon Lion Island. When you pass out into the ocean you wrap your rug about you and lie down on deck, and the Pacific rocks you to sleep, and you wake with the lights of Sydney Harbour shining on you, and for many days and many nights to come you think and dream of the Hawkesbury.



LION ISLAND.

SOUTH QUEENSLAND.

Brisbane—Its Climate and Surroundings—Immigrants—One Tree Hill—The Observatory—The Seaside—The Glasshouse Mountains—Tambourine Mountain—Ipswich and Toowoomba—The Main Range—Highfields—Picnic Point—The Darling Downs.

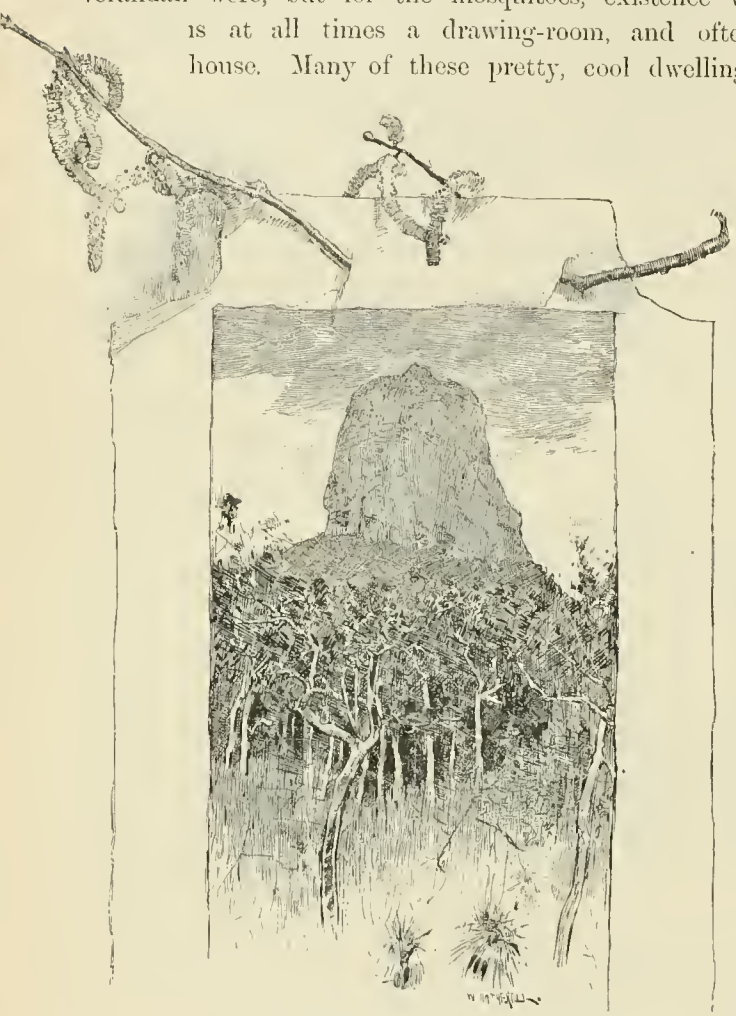


THE OBSERVATORY, BRISBANE.

BRISBANE is well placed as a centre from which to reach a number of attractive and interesting localities. By rail or steamer they can be quickly approached, and in the space of a few days a traveller from other climes may, in turn, look upon prospects of great beauty and of strikingly diverse character. The allegation of the cursory sightseer notwithstanding, the scenery around the capital of Queensland has to a considerable degree the attribute of variety. With impressions of tropical luxuriance fresh on the memory, one may turn to scenes whose leading features resemble those of the temperate zones. Within an easy drive of the capital the visitor may penetrate dense "scrubs," whose true character were better conveyed to his mind by the title of jungles; he may steam along the coast of the Bay, past great tracts of mangrove reigning supreme over miles of alluvial mud and salt water; by rail he may traverse the open forests which clothe the foot-hills of the Main Range, and, having topped that chain (the Cordillera of the Pacific coast), behold the rolling plains of the Darling Downs stretching away towards the setting sun, affording in their waving grasses and rich herbage some of the finest pasturage in the world. Then, coming back to his starting-point, he may indulge a taste for waterfalls and fern-gullies on Tambourine Mountain, or among the Glasshouse Mountains explore the forbidding stacks of bare rock, and study their geology. He may yacht on the wide stretch of land-locked waters of Moreton Bay, or even venture on the open Pacific, and, at Noosa, may thread inland lakes and their tributary streams, rich in wildfowl and fish, or may watch the timber-getters at work among the cedars and pines on their shores.

One of the first features which strike the attention of the stranger approaching Brisbane, especially by the river, is the architecture of the dwelling-houses. The prevailing style is, with modifications, that of the Indian bungalow—a single, sometimes double, storeyed cottage, generally of wood, with pyramidal roof, and surrounded by broad verandahs, upon which open many French doors or low windows. Closed in by bamboo curtains or Venetians, furnished with hammocks, ample cane lounges and easy-chairs, the verandah is on summer evenings the most important tributary to the comfort of a house. By keeping off the heat of the sun's rays from windows and walls, it enables the house to be kept cool and open to the sea-

breeze, which, blowing from the north-east, is the great temperer of the summer heat. As with the Japanese, the proper method of making a house cool here is to "take down the walls," not, as in those regions of Australia where hot winds prevail, to close the house against the blast. In the coast districts of Queensland, evening on a verandah were, but for the mosquitoes, existence worthy a lotus-eater. By usage it is at all times a drawing-room, and often bears the dancing-floor of the house. Many of these pretty, cool dwellings peep from among the trees or show out upon the hill-sides round Brisbane, where in time to come they will be thickly dotted.



THE GLASSHOUSE MOUNTAIN.

The best time to see Brisbane and its neighbourhood is in the cool months, from May to September. Then the midday heat is not great, and lacks the humidity and "mugginess" of the later summer months, while the nights are cool and fine. With the departure of thunder-clouds, heat-haze, and the smoke of bush-fires, the Australian sky re-asserts itself in all its glory, brilliant and clear. The air becomes dry and crisp, to an extent distinctly perceptible by the lungs, and with marked effect on the spirits, and objects at great distances are clearly visible and seem near at hand. Very lovely and attractive must the land appear to the immigrant arriving at this season, after six weeks of the weary monotony of the ocean steamer, or twice as long a spell of it in a sailing vessel, and now looking upon his future home, the land of promise smiling and bright in the glittering air.

The landing of immigrants is a scene of great interest, and suggestive of many reflections upon the contrast between the surroundings and conditions of their past and of their future homes, and upon their prospects in the New World, where a measure of success is attainable by all. The new arrivals are transhipped in the river from the big steamer to a tug, and from that are landed at the Government depôt. When leaving the steamer, and as they step ashore, they are passed to the depôt by the officials, and there are lodged until they find work or friends, or are forwarded to other depôts up-

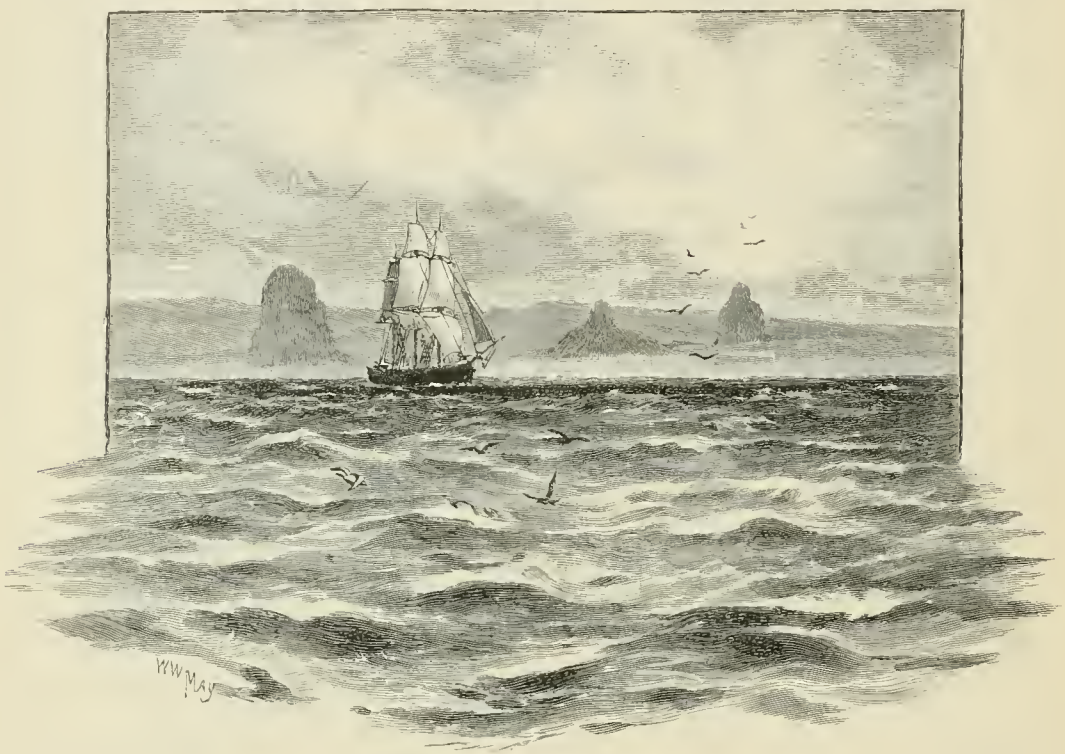
country. As they come ashore they are in striking contrast to the native Australians and adopted colonials present, and for a considerable time the character of "new chum" is as plainly evidenced by their appearance and dress as if they were labelled with the title. Whole families, groups of young men and women, and the inevitable lonely ones file down the gangways—some searching for friendly faces in those around them, others looking about in simple curiosity, all interested and observant. No sooner is the luggage landed, and a few formalities gone through with the officials, than they are out into the town, "looking round"—the first stage in the process of merging themselves in the New World community.

The vegetation about Brisbane and Ipswich consists of gum-tree bush and heavy scrubs; the one with its varieties of eucalyptus and acacia, the other abounding in scores of species of more tropical type, in fig-trees and pines, while over and around all twine wonderful vines hundreds of feet in length, reaching from the tree tops to the ground. In the warm, moist shades of these scrubs, many lovely members of the wonderful orchid family luxuriate, and give forth blossoms that would be the envy of an Old World fancier. There used to be many of these scrubs about Brisbane in the old days, but they have vanished from near town. The rich alluvial soil has been gladly cleared for agriculture, and every suburban ridge affords its quota of village sites. Notwithstanding the climate artificial tree planting has advanced very slowly. Much of the cultivation near Brisbane is not interesting as a feature of the landscape, but the novelty of some of the productions commands attention. Maize, sugar-cane, and pine-apple fields, especially the last, are calculated to puzzle the stranger only accustomed to the crops of temperate climes. The pine-apple is a crop of egregious appearance. The plant is composed of a bunch of smooth, blade-like leaves, about eighteen inches or two feet in length, of a purplish-green tint, and armed with sharp saw-edges and hard point. These leaves spring from a common centre, rising in a circle from a small base at the root, and spread out in graceful curves round the fruit which springs from a stalk in their midst, and itself bears a crown of smaller leaves, like those of the plant, smooth of surface and serrated of edge. The fruit, as it swells and ripens, turns from a dusty-green to different tints of yellow, according to the species. The plants are grown in rows, a foot or so apart, and rise not more than two feet from the ground.

There are many interesting drives around the city. It is scarcely necessary to detail the many which have the river for their objective. That fine stream is approachable at many points on its winding course, and repays study of its beauties. Some lovely and peaceful views may be had in the late afternoon on its upper reaches; equally beautiful are those from the water, whether in early morning, at the approach of evening, or by the bright moonlight. For here there is no danger from malaria or miasma—so shunned in other countries. Two drives from Brisbane are worthy of mention—namely, to the Enoggera Waterworks Reserve (of which some notice has been given in the article on Brisbane City, Vol. I., p. 104) and to One Tree Hill.

One Tree Hill, or "Coot-tha"—more correctly (Mount) "Goot-tcha," "wild bees' nest" or "sugar-bog," of the aborigines—is at the southern end of Taylor's Range

and about six miles, as the crow flies, from Enoggera, and is reached from the city by a road of about five miles, the last of which is up a steep winding ridge that forms one of the spurs of the hill. The greater part of Coot-tha is a public reserve in the hands of trustees, who have provided a shelter-shed and water-tanks at the summit, and maintain the road and fences. From the top, where the dead trunk of the old "One Tree" is preserved, there is a splendid prospect of the city and surrounding country. Brisbane lies close at hand, looking very white and clean, with the many winding reaches of the river showing here and there as "eyes in the landscape." On



THE GLASSHOUSE MOUNTAINS FROM THE SEA.

clear days the houses of Ipswich, twenty miles away on the one side, are discernible; and on the other side the Bay, with Moreton Island in the background, and the shipping at the anchorage, can easily be seen.

The view of the city from One Tree Hill is panoramic. A nearer, though not so comprehensive, view is obtainable from several of the lesser eminences which overlook the town. The residential roads or terraces, with houses on one side only (such as Wickham and Bowen Terraces on the north, and River Terrace and Highgate Hill on the south of the river), are amongst the best, although there are many such coigns of vantage in the suburbs. Wickham Terrace is noticeable for its landmark, known of old as the Observatory. This is an old windmill-tower which has remained from the early settlement days, and has been for some years the time-gun and shipping signal

station. From the top of this tower, where, too, the fire-watchman keeps lonely vigil at night, there is a fine view of those parts of the city which are known as the north and south sides—names coeval with the mill. The earliest settlement was on the south side; afterwards the tide of fashion or of trade ran to the north side, where the chief business quarter now is. After a period of neglect, advantage was taken of the ample

THE DARLING DOWNS FROM KING'S CREEK.

opportunities for wharf and street frontage on the south side, and there is now one of the principal outlying shipping quarters of the city.

From Brisbane to the seaside is an easy distance. There are many haunts round the spacious waters of Moreton Bay, but Southport, Humpybong, and Sandgate are first in favour. As to the others, whether large or small, they have no attractive country behind—in fact, nothing but a sandy beach, water, and perhaps an island a mile or two away; their *raison d'être*, salt water and a sea-breeze. Southport, sixty miles

away, whether by water or by rail, is fashionable. The Governor has a seaside cottage there, and it is "the correct thing" with many to summer there also, when not able to go south to the Blue Mountains, Tasmania, or the New Zealand lakes. Southport affords some variety for holiday-makers. It is at the most southerly end of the Bay, and occupies that part of the mainland which is opposite to the narrow, sandy, southern extremity of Stradbroke Island, and to the small boat-entrance through which the little steamers from the Tweed River pass on their way to Brisbane. On the south side of the township is the mouth of Nerang Creek. When the tide is ebbing from both the Bay and the creek, the combined flow creates at the boat-entrance a strong current, which makes rowing a serious matter for any but the most experienced. There is not much that is picturesque at Southport. Two piers, a great expanse of sand and shallow water, where the sojourners kill time bathing, boating, and fishing; a grand piece of "outer" or ocean beach, beyond Nerang Creek, facing the Pacific; some pretty bits up the creek, with the usual rich scrub, in which are some fine fig and other scrub trees—this sums up the material with which people make themselves very happy. There are many places near fit for yachting and camping out, and, though few know it, there are very lovely sunsets to be seen over the hills behind the township.

Leaving the neighbourhood of Brisbane and its attendant watering-places, and going further afield, there are many pleasanter places along the Bay and inland. Caloundra, which faces the Pacific at the open north end of Moreton Bay, is on a cheery, breezy stretch of low bluff, and bright sandy beach, and will, when easier of access, be a popular resort. Inland from this part of the coast lie the Glasshouse Mountains—strange name for stranger hills. The conical peaks of these great masses of rock are visible from the sea, and in clear weather from Cape Moreton. They are of basaltic formation, and present on near view the many forms of that rock—fluted organ-fronts, columns, and alternating shelves and caves. They are nearly bare of vegetation, except for a few vines and occasional patches of grass and stray weeds. What they lack in vegetation, however, they make up in the snakes and other reptiles by which they are infested. Between the *taboo* of these unwelcome occupants and the absolute inaccessibility of parts of these strange rocks, the Glasshouses have not yet been fully explored.

By way of contrast let us turn to Tambourine Mountain, which lies away to the south of Brisbane, just off the road to Southport The Logan railway is extended to its base, and the trip fron town takes about two hours. The mountain is the highest of the hills which form the watershed of the heads of the Logan, Nerang, and Albert Rivers, on the southern border of the colony, and is, like most of the hills in that corner of the country, volcanic in formation, and in its richness of soil. The lower flanks of the mountain are under cultivation, and other tracts on and about it are taken up as grazing-farms. It rears itself 2,000 feet in the air, and its summit is a fine plateau of seven or eight square miles, where grow in the greatest luxuriance tree and other ferns, acacias, wild flowers, and vines, with the orchids and mosses which cling about the magnificent cedars and other tall denizens of this rich mountain-garden

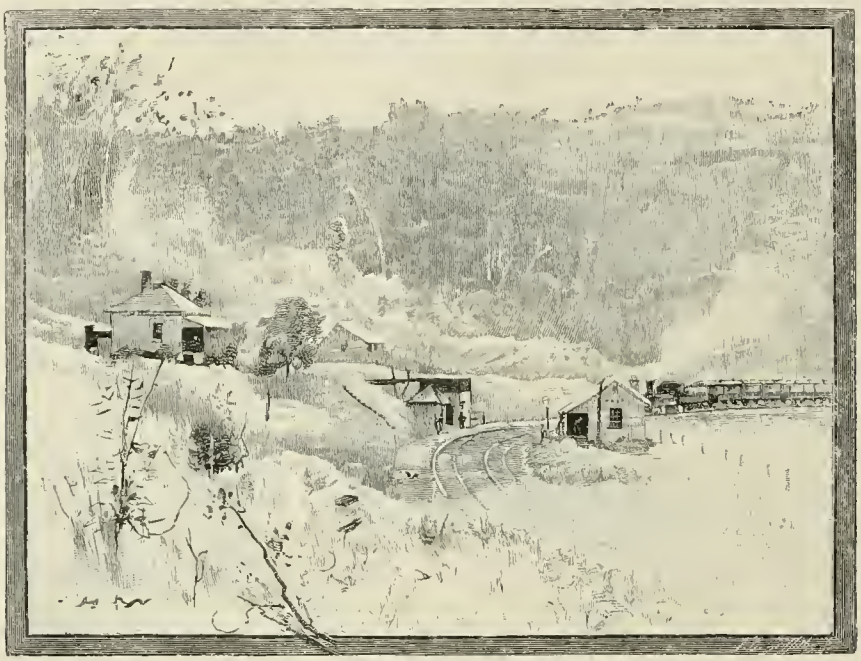
Amidst all this lavish beauty of the plant-world, rills and creeks wander here and there towards the edge of the table-land, where they combine to form some lovely waterfalls. The pools at the bottom of these are fit for fairyland. The air on this grand eminence is, of course, in marked contrast with that of the lowlands beneath it, for the breezes reach it from every quarter, cool and rarefied by the altitude, and the sun's rays lack some of their tropical force. All these characteristics combine to make Tambourine an attractive spot for a summer retreat as well as an excursionist's resort, and no doubt in time it will become a favourite for the inevitable *villegiatura* of a warm climate. But above all is it delectable for the splendid views to be had from many parts of the plateau, and from the eastern and southern slopes of the mountain. From the eastern side one sees that part of Moreton Bay known as the Broadwater, running among islands down to Southport, on the far side of which is the southern end of Stradbroke Island extending down to the Southport entrance or boat passage, and beyond that the great Pacific stretching away to the horizon. Right below run the Logan, Nerang, and Coomera Rivers creeping through the bush to the Bay. To the south the eye may trace (some miles beyond Southport) the ocean coast-line and Burleigh Head standing out against the blue sea, while yet further south looms the southern boundary cape of Point Danger. From the northern face are visible, further inland, Mounts Lindsay and Flinders, with their well-defined peaks, and the rich country of the Teviot, Coochin, and Maroon districts—rolling hills, open forest, and creeks bordered by rich vegetation.

Westward from Brisbane the Southern and Western main line of railway runs to Ipswich and Toowoomba, and at a few miles beyond the latter place branches off on one side southward to Warwick, Stanthorpe, and the southern border, to meet the New South Wales northern trunk line, and, on the other, westward to Dalby, Roma, and the far west, where in time it may reach very nearly to the place where Burke and Wills, about a quarter of a century ago, lost their lives.

Ipswich—of old called Limestone—is about twenty-five miles from the capital, and is situated on the Bremer River, the main tributary of the Brisbane. In the earlier days communication between the two towns was by Cobb's coach and by river steamer, the latter method affording a pretty and interesting trip. The railway, which for some years did not run past Ipswich (then aspiring to be the metropolis), has displaced both the old forms of transit, and men now live in Ipswich and carry on their daily avocations in Brisbane. The former town, once so aspiring, is now the quiet but prosperous centre of a rich agricultural, grazing, and coal-mining district, and is the site of large railway workshops. Like Brisbane, it is built by the river, and on hilly country. One eminence in the middle of the town, called Denmark Hill, overlooks town and country, and is steep—too steep in parts for building upon. Opposite to it on the south is Limestone Hill, which has the characteristic round outline of the limestone formation to which it belongs. On the north slope of Limestone Hill, facing the town, are the Public Gardens and Park, which are gracefully planted and broken into a series of sloping lawns. The principal business thoroughfare, Brisbane Street, runs out past the Gardens, and, as it disappears over the hill, merges into a

pleasant country road. The north side of the town is the best worth seeing, that part which lies on the other side of the river being dominated by railway-sheds and workshops. The two sides are connected by a lofty iron bridge, called the Railway Bridge, although serving for both railway and ordinary traffic.

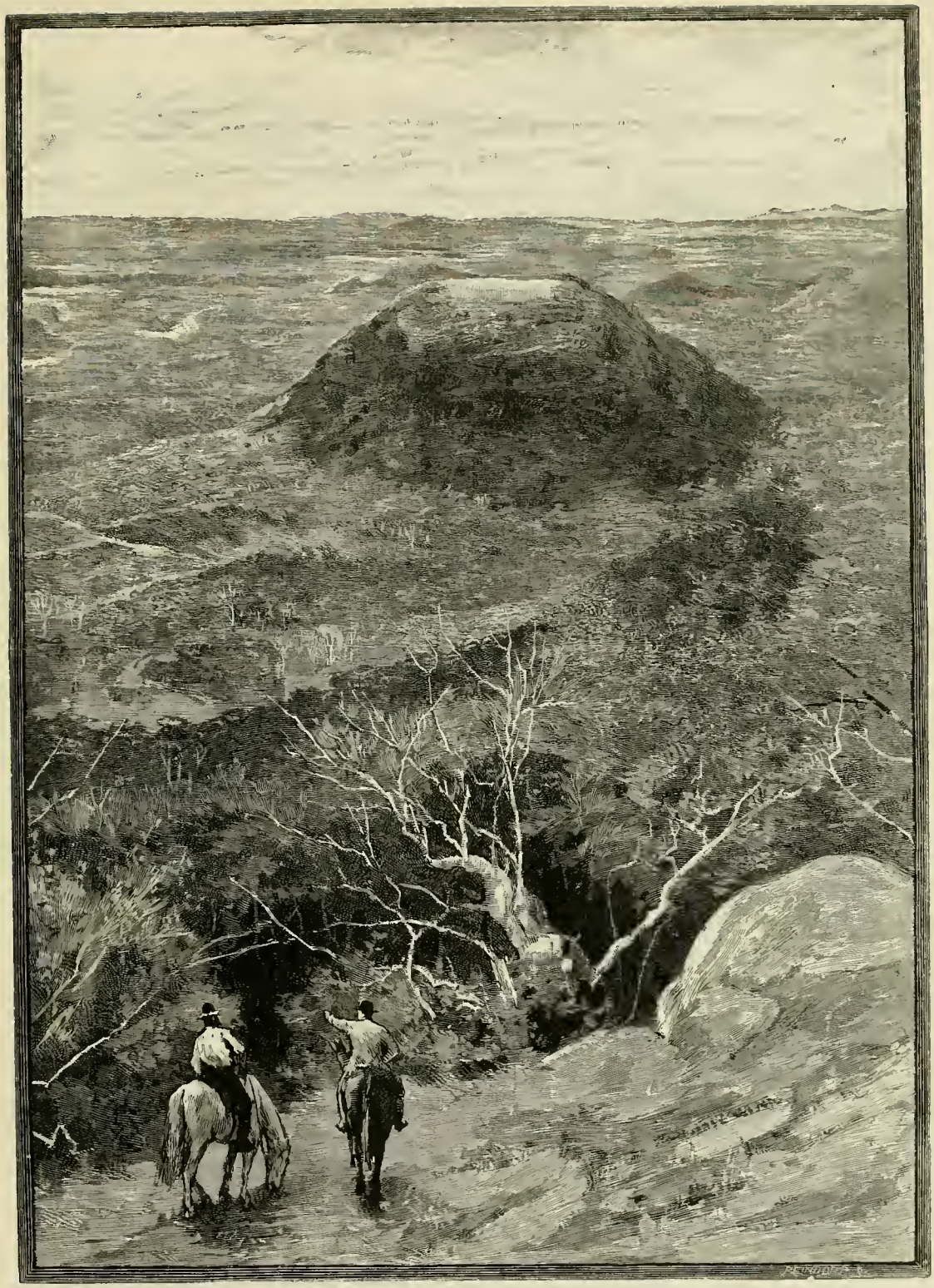
Continuing the railway route westward, the line, after crossing two lowland tracts and the Little Liverpool Range between, begins to ascend the easterly slope of the Main Range. The journey thus far is an interesting one, and during a great part of the time is through grazing paddocks, scrubland farms, and open bush. The most



RAILWAY STATION, HIGHFIELDS.

important district *en route* is that of the Rosewood Scrub, which takes its name from the great dense scrub which, almost impenetrable, once stretched for miles over hill and valley, but is now rapidly disappearing before the industry of German, Irish, and other farmers, who have settled on its rich alluvial soil.

A journey by rail as far as the town of Toowoomba, on the eastern side of the Darling Downs, is strongly recommended to all visitors to Brisbane who are lovers of the picturesque. The scenery traversed on the Main Range is hardly less grand than that of the Blue Mountains. At the foot of the Main Range, where the engine starts on its climb up the spurs and round the slopes of this part of the Australian Cordillera, is Murphy's Creek and its freestone quarries. The track here becomes sinuous as a snake's, all the while on a steady, steep up-grade. On the right hand tower the declivities of the upper hills, and on the left are valleys and deep gullies, thick with trees, and here and there lighted by a gleaming watercourse; while beyond, other hills rear their heads



LIVERPOOL RANGE FROM PICNIC POINT, TOOWOOMBA.

in succession away to the south. Just as the level edge of the summit of the range becomes distinguishable, the train rounds one of the series of spurs, and brings us face to face with a remarkable hill on the other side of a deep valley. The steep face of this hill opposite us is, unlike the rest, almost denuded of growing trees, dead trunks of which are visible strewn amidst a tremendous slide or landslip of rocks, which at some unknown date have rushed down its declivity, sweeping all before them. In striking contrast, at the foot is a luxuriant bit of fig-tree scrub, shading the pretty, babbling little creek, which threads its way from its native springs above the railway down the hillside and through the valley or "gully," which we now see is overlooked from this side by a small plateau jutting from the steep face of the hill, and occupied by a white cottage, which commands a fair vista of valley and hill. On the other—the right-hand—side of the line the hills, clothed with magnificent trees, tower in one grand slope to the summit, 2,500 feet above the sea, where lies the settlement of Highfields. The station at this point, called Highfields, hangs midway on the slope, and takes its name from the district which, hundreds of feet above, is connected with the line by a steep road that, as it winds down the hillside, requires only the approaching figure of Rip Van Winkle to complete a romantic picture.

Not many minutes after the engine has drunk his fill of the cold mountain water of the Highfields springs, the train, threading a number of small tunnels, at last completes its long ascent, when, shooting through a deep cutting, and leaving the hills behind, it runs out upon the easy slope which leans towards the town of Toowoomba, now visible a mile or two away. Toowoomba is an unassuming town in appearance, built on an almost level site, with many open spaces among its blocks, and few buildings of more than two storeys. Outside the principal streets the town quickly straggles away over several low undulating ridges into fruit-gardens, and merges into the surrounding market-gardens, orchards, and orangeries for which the district is noted.

The principal streets—Ruthven and Margaret Streets—are occupied chiefly by modest one and two-storeyed shops and stores. The public buildings are in the latter street, and include the post and telegraph office, land-agent's office, and court-house. The School of Arts is at the westerly end of Ruthven Street. The Anglican and Catholic churches are the best examples of architecture in the town; both are elegant buildings. A peculiar effect is wrought in the appearance of the town by the ubiquitous "red mud" upon which Toowoomba is built. This is a tenacious, clayey loam, of volcanic origin, rich and fertile, but all-pervading when dust, and most adhesive as mud. It colours walls, roofs, and fences a dirty red, and by its contrast gives the grass a peculiar glaring hue of green.

The original township of this district was placed by the Government at Drayton, about three miles north-west of Toowoomba. Messrs. Taylor and Pitts, however, two of the pioneers of the Darling Downs, selected the present site of Toowoomba for a settlement, which was known as "The Swamp," on account of the permanent water, for the sake of which it had been chosen and continued popular. Traces of the sluggish watercourse which trickled through the Swamp are still visible near the railway station

in the middle of the now prosperous Toowoomba, the centre of the rich Darling Downs district, while Drayton has dwindled away to a few weather-beaten, tumble-down cottages, which yet linger on the dry ridges.

To the south of the town, on the edge of "the range," is a favourite spot, known as Picnic Point. From here a glorious view of the Main Range opens out—hill and valley clothed with the universal gum-tree, and wearing something of the blue-haze tint which gave the name of Blue Mountains to that part of the chain which lies west of Sydney. The prospect is an inspiring one, and the ever-passing breeze, filtered and scented by the gum-forests below, is a delight to the senses of the denizen of the muggy coast or of the scorched inland plains. One striking feature of the scene from here is the entire absence of water from the landscape; there is none visible, though there are creeks down in the shadows of the deep valleys. Some hills close by and opposite to the Point are perfect cones with narrow tops, flat as tables, and of the same height as the level on which the town rests. They suggest a continuation of the Downs westward in the past, and the cutting up of their site by some great movement of the waters. The sides of these hills are well wooded, but the tops bear only grass or shrubs. There is little doubt that the Downs themselves were at some time under water; that they were during some period the floor of a great shallow sea is quite likely. Evidence of something of the kind is afforded by the presence of mammoth bones in the banks of Gowrie and King's Creek and other localities, pointing to prior occupation by giant species of living and of extinct genera, and a subsequent alluvion over the level expanse of inland plain country. About Gowrie and King's Creeks, as elsewhere about other main creeks throughout the Downs, the continuity of the plains is broken by small ranges of low hills, whose wooded sides are in contrast to the grassy levels between. It is further west that the plains expand in their glory to proportions equal to those of the North American prairies. The western branch of the trunk line out to Roma and Mitchell brings the traveller to these tracts.

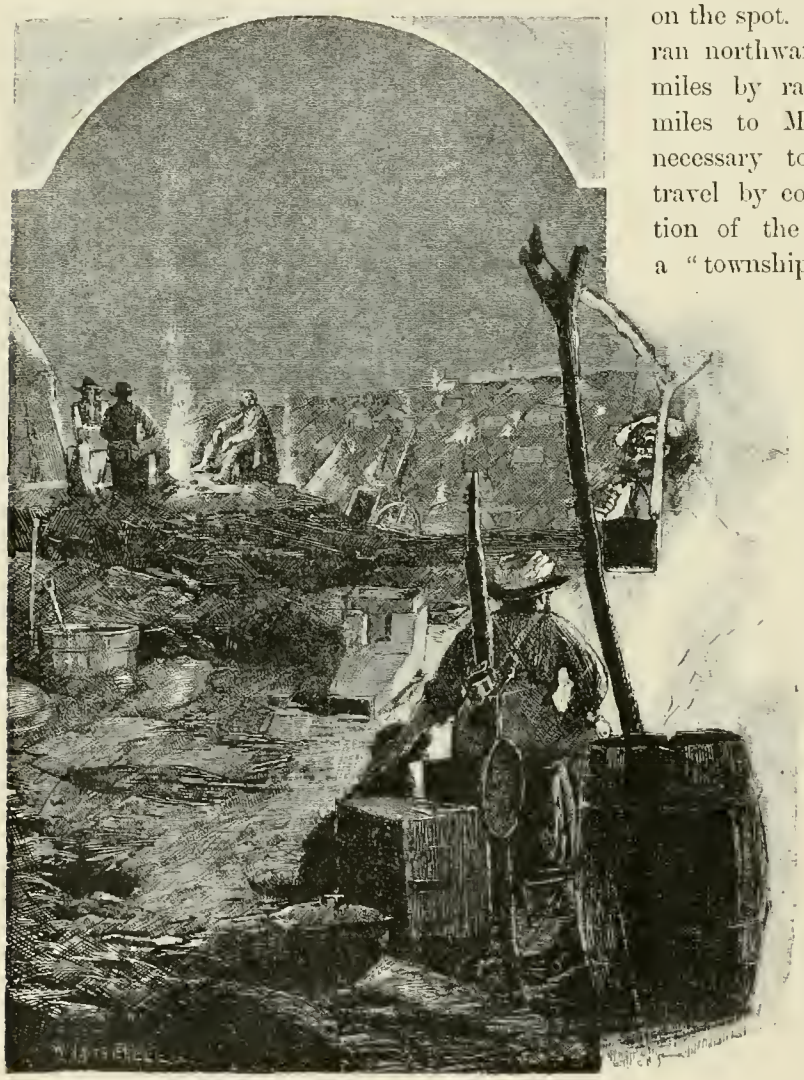
The junction of the southern and western branches is at Gowrie, a few miles beyond Toowoomba, where some typical examples of Darling Downs country and of head sheep-stations may be seen in a few hours' ride. Following the train journey by the southern branch, Warwick is reached in about four hours. This is a smaller town than Toowoomba, and somewhat different in character. It is situated on much lower land than the surrounding country, upon the Condamine River. It is a compact town, clean in comparison with Toowoomba, and has a bright appearance, being well laid-out, and the monotony of its buildings being relieved by a great number of trees. The river, too, with a thick fringe of native trees and willow, is a pretty little stream.

Beyond Warwick, on the railway, lie Stanthorpe and the border township of Wallangarra, whence the iron horse crosses the boundary line on the way southward to Tenterfield, the present northern terminus of the New South Wales northern trunk line.

TEETULPA GOLDFIELD.

The Discovery—The Journey there—The First Find—The Rush—Starvation—Ups and Downs—The "Joker" Nugget—Goslin's Gully—Night—Sickness—*Al Fresco*—Characteristics.

THE discovery of gold in the north-east district of South Australia, in October, 1886, produced great excitement in the city of Adelaide. The locality was more than two hundred miles from the city, and very seldom was it visited, unless by shepherds in search of sheep. The country was believed to be auriferous, but no trial had been made of it; so the squatter held undisturbed possession of the land. The discovery changed all that, however, and in a very short time thousands of people were on the spot. The route from Adelaide ran northwards to Petersburgh, 154 miles by rail; thence eastward 80 miles to Mannahill. Here it was necessary to leave the train and travel by coach the remaining portion of the distance. Mannahill is a "township;" it has one public-house, one general store, and various out-buildings. At one time the "Mannahill Hotel" was nothing more than an eating-house, but it had now procured a licence, and dealt in whisky and *delirium tremens*. The train from Petersburgh arrived at this delectable spot early in the morning, and those travellers who required breakfast must e'en get it at the hotel or go without. Breakfast, however, was in name only. The food provided consisted of mutton-chops floating in grease, bread, salt



NIGHT.

butter, and weak tea. And the bar was full of men in every stage of intoxication —from the maudlin to the combative and the "dead drunk."

The coach did not leave Mannahill until well on towards noon. It was drawn by four horses—cattle good of their kind, but overworked by the sudden demand of extra journeys to be performed. Two extra coaches had to be put on to accommodate the crowd; notwithstanding which, many men walked and carried their "swag" on their backs.

The road ran through country made up of low rolling hills interspersed with small plains. There was no grass—that had vanished some week or so before, when a breath of summer touched it. The ground was covered with two species of plants—the blue-bush and the salt-bush. The former has small, fleshy, pear-shaped blue leaves which grow on a curiously-gnarled and antiquated-looking stem to a height of about two feet. The latter is sage-green in colour, growing in bushes from nine to twelve inches high. Both are common to the northern districts of South Australia. They provide good food for stock, but they give the landscape a sober, dull tinge that is not inspiriting to the traveller.

The coach journey was slow and wearisome, owing to rough roads and fagged horses. At sundown, on rising to the crest of a low hill, the passengers beheld lying at their feet Brady's Gully, then in its infancy. There was nothing attractive in the view. Few goldfields, perhaps, have been so devoid of picturesque features as that of Teetulpa. The gully (or small valley) in which the first gold had been found ran north and south between low, round-topped hills. Hardly any trees were to be seen, and no water ever ran in the watercourse, except during heavy rain. In all directions could be seen reefs of white quartz standing out in clear relief amid the prevailing colours of blue and salt-bush. To the northward lay an immense plain, on which (here and there) straggling lines of acacias marked the shallow gutters where water sometimes ran. Beyond the plain stood two hills (Mount Victor and Mount Victoria), sharply defined against the evening sky.

In the gully were some twenty or thirty tents, and two or three hawkers' vans. Men were working in the watercourse, but at that time they were not spread

over an area of land greater than half a mile in length by one hundred yards in width.

The chief point of attraction was a spot where a strong flood (which had come down the creek some years previously) had washed away the upper soil to a depth of four or five feet, and had left exposed the auriferous gravel and sand. The discoverer of the field had walked along this place one evening while travelling to a distant part of the country, and had been forced to take shelter under the banks from a sudden shower of rain; when it cleared off, the sun came out, and a ray fell upon a piece of gold lying exposed upon the rock and washed clean by the shower. Then began the worship of the golden calf. The man went down on his knees, and with his knife scraped in the gravel. In half an hour he had found two pounds' worth of gold. This was "payable," and the next thing to be done was to hurry off to the nearest police-station (sixteen miles distant), and put in a claim for the Government reward. This was no less than £1,000 and ten claims in land, the sole condition being that the new field must be not less than twenty miles from any other gold-diggings, and that it must give employment for six months to one thousand men.

These conditions have been fulfilled, for six months after the rush set in to Teetulpa there were upwards of four thousand diggers on the ground, and the Government paid the reward. But the original claims were by no means the richest; there were others that produced treble the amount of gold.

Every day that dawned saw the influx of people steadily increasing. They came by coach, in carts and waggons, on horseback and on foot; and as but few brought provisions with them, something resembling a famine was the result. In the space of a week or ten days upwards of fifteen hundred men had arrived, and storekeepers had not had time to get their goods to the field, nor to put up houses. Numbers of men were almost starving, and at night would visit their more fortunate fellows and beg for food. They usually got some, though but little could be spared. There were many instances of positive distress amongst shopmen and clerks—classes that have no business on a goldfield.

Some fifty or sixty sheep were brought daily to the field by an enterprising butcher; but these were only as a bite to the hungry crowd. Bread also was scarce; and as firewood was hardly to be had in the neighbourhood, men were unable to bake any for themselves. Fires were made of the roots of the blue-bush, but these were not sufficient to produce the glowing embers necessary for baking "dampers" (unleavened cakes of flour and water). For a couple of weeks the only bread to be had was that brought in two carts from a distance of sixteen miles; each cart contained about two hundred two-pound loaves, and the baker asked famine prices for them. On one occasion he got as much as two shillings a loaf, and his cart was besieged and emptied in less than ten minutes. Even to get bread at this price a man had to be strong, and able to fight his way through the crowd to the cart. Later on three huge ovens were built, and circumstances improved. And yet there were drawbacks. One day, for example, an oven fell in, and the bakers employed at the other two struck work until their wages were raised.

Stores also were put up, and so many of them that competition was keen, and prices became most reasonable. Yet there were many men without money to buy necessaries, and much distress was the result. Wealth and poverty walked side by side on the goldfield, even as they do in the city.

A wonderful change had, during these few days, come over the appearance of the gully. For a mile and three-quarters in length it was marked out in claims, and heaps of dirt rose on all sides, around which the men swarmed like bees, and amongst them moved an ever-restless stream of people. These were either men looking for a "likely" spot, or merely visitors from a distance come to see what diggings were really like. The scene was most animated, and through the people ran a fever of excitement and unrest, for the spirit of gambling was strong within them. It was useless for the newspaper correspondents to write, saying that there were more people already on the field than could be supported, and that the gold was scarce and difficult to be found. People read the reports; they saw the distress chronicled day by day, but they also saw accounts of gold found. They remembered the last item only, and the cry was, "Still they come!"

There was no doubt about the gold being difficult to get. It lay in "pockets" and in narrow gutters, and unless every inch of ground in the claim was turned over a valuable deposit might be missed. Dame Fortune played most abominable pranks on many a poor man. Two friends (bank-clerks) worked together for nearly three weeks and got nothing. They each had five shillings left. Said one—

"I'm going to sling this, old chap. I can work no longer. My five bob will keep me in food till I walk to Adelaide, or can meet a friend who will lend me money."

"Don't give in yet, man; wait another week, our luck may turn."

"I won't stop another hour. You can have my share of the claim and the tent and everything."

So they parted—one made to Adelaide, broken in spirit; the other returned to his work and slaved away, hoping against hope. On the following day he struck on a lump of gold, two ounces and a half in weight, and worth about £10; and that was not the last he found, nor the largest.

One other case was even more singular. A man had worked hard for a month without success, but instead of throwing up his claim and trying another spot, as so many foolishly did, he worked steadily on. One morning half-a-dozen idlers gathered about the top of the hole, and began to make fun of the owner, asking what he would take for the whole claim.

Half in jest, half in earnest, he replied—"Give me twenty-five shillings and you shall have the lot; an' I'll throw this old pick into the bargain."

The offer was scoffed at. What, twenty-five shillings for a claim that was valueless! It was absurd to ask such a price. Ten shillings was offered, and the man was half inclined to accept it. Thinking the matter over, he began to pick away at the wall of earth in front of him. At the third blow he drove his pick well in, and some strength was necessary to prize it out again. As it came, however, it brought down a lot of

earth, which broke and scattered on the floor of the shaft. The man looked at it, from mere force of habit, and then he made a sudden dive and picked up what looked more like a clod of earth than anything else. But he was not deceived; in his hand lay a lump of gold, four ounces in weight at the very least. "This here claim is withdrawn from sale until furder notice," he said; "I won't take twenty-five shillings even!"

No one who was on the field at the time will forget the excitement that was aroused when the "Joker" nugget was found. No other has yet been obtained on Teetulpa that can equal it in weight. It turned the scale at thirty ounces, and was bought by the Government for the sum of £120. In size and shape it resembled a man's hand; it was thick at the wrist part, and tapered off towards the fingers. It was not found until after the field was some six weeks old, and it was hidden by a bare six inches of gravel. Hundreds and thousands of feet must have trampled over it. The claim in which it lay was one of those in that portion of the creek that had been laid bare by floods. Very little manual labour was required to work it; it was only necessary to loosen the gravel with a pick, and then for the digger to lie down on a bag and "fossick" through the stuff with a butcher's knife. The claim had been a good one from the first, and the owner was one of the wealthy men of Teetulpa. So on this day, reclining full length, leaning on one arm, the man searched for nuggets. He made a sweep with his knife to push back some of the gravel, and his eye caught sight of the "Joker." He at once covered it with his hand, and sat up, rather wondering how he would secure his treasure without being seen. If the find became known, every man in the field would tramp to the spot and invade his claim, and so prevent him working. A man in an adjoining claim looked up. "Found anything?" he asked.

"No! Seen the colour, that's all. Pitch my coat over to me, will you? it's lying near you, there. I want a smoke."

"Here you are, mate. But what's the matter? You look pale. Don't you feel right?"

"I'm all right; only the sun is a bit hot."

He was struggling with an insane desire to laugh; but he got his coat over the nugget and seated himself on top of it. Then laughter overpowered him, and he became hysterical. Those about him wondered, but thought the sun had affected him. In a little while he regained his composure, and decided to go to his tent. In lifting his coat he managed to take up the lump of gold, and no one knew that he had found anything. It was not until ten days had passed that the fact was noised abroad, and even then few knew the claim whence the "Joker" came. Numerous other nuggets were found of weights ranging to twenty, sixteen, twelve, and ten ounces, and those of six ounces and less were almost common—almost, not quite.

For some days after this the field was comparatively quiet, but soon to be shaken to its very centre by the discovery of gold in another gully. The original one was known as Brady's, after the name of the prospector; and the new one was

THE BAKER'S CART.

called Goslin's—not because Goslin found anything there, but because he tried to do so and failed. The place had been prospected for some time, but nothing was found, and it was voted a "duffer" and abandoned. But there came a man who could find no place in Brady's Gully to suit him, and he marked out a claim in Goslin's, "jist to see what was underneath like." He bottomed the hole (*i.e.*, reached the bed-rock) at a depth of three feet, and struck upon a "pocket" or "nest" of nuggets lying in a hollow of the rock. They had probably been swirled together by the action of a current of water. The biggest of the pieces was not more than four ounces, but the "pocket" contained no less than two pounds' weight, equal in value to nearly £100; not a bad return for one day's work.

The news spread like wildfire, for this man made no secret of his find, and in ten minutes Brady's Gully was deserted. The men swarmed over the hill that separated the two gullies, and clustered as thick as bees around the claim. In less than an hour the ground was pegged out in claims from end to end, and the place that once was silent and deserted now echoed to the strokes of hundreds of picks and the jokes and laughter of as many men. A few of the claims turned out well, but, on the whole, the old gully was the richer of the two.

The view presented by the field at night was very striking. Seen from the hills at the head of the gully, a narrow black strip represented the claims, but on both sides of that shone the almost countless lights of the camps of the diggers. The scene was brilliant, and the place resembled a miniature city, for in length it had now grown to be more than two miles. Strolling down amongst the tents, a variety of sounds met the ear. Musical instruments of various kinds were in use, from the jew's-harp and the concertina to the cornet-à-piston and the violin. From some tents issued songs, and many of them were capitally sung. Card-playing was universal, and gambling was indulged in by those who had money to lose. But there were no public-houses, for, until the field had been in existence six months, the Government would not issue permits. Sly grog-selling was practised to some extent, and no great harm resulted from it. Those who braved the terrors of the law were careful that those to whom they sold "nobblers" (glasses of spirits) should not drink too deeply, and so expose them.

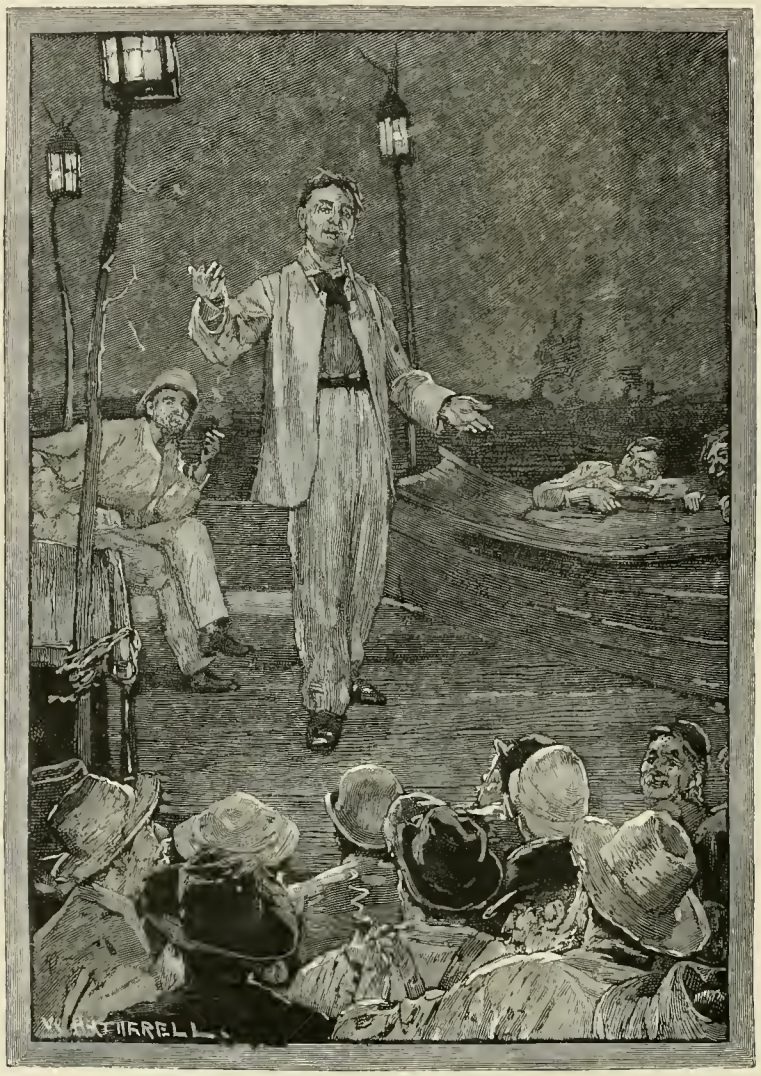
Fights were of rare occurrence, and when one did take place, water was generally at the bottom of it. Sometimes a man would have a small tank of water on his claim, and a neighbour would endeavour to steal some of the precious fluid. Then the owner would "go for" that man, and do all he knew to blacken his eyes and flatten his nose. Still, taken as a community, no quieter men ever assembled; and this was extraordinary, considering the variety of nations and creeds there present. One great feature of this field was the dust; it was omnipotent. The soil was light and friable, and the constant traffic of men and horses and carts broke it up into the fineness of flour. Every gust of wind raised it in clouds, and as there was never a calm day, the result may be imagined. A cloud hung over the diggings from daylight till dark. The roads or tracks leading to the well, or through the little township, were ankle-deep in dust. It penetrated everywhere. At meal-times was it especially obnoxious.

Across the "gully" in the "town" were several "eating-houses," made of old bags and calico nailed on a framework of wood. At one of these a table of rough planks ran the whole length of the place, and benches (more or less rickety) formed the seats. As many as fifty men sat down to every meal. The food was good in its way, though rough and coarse, and, as a rule, potatoes, cabbages, jam, pickles, and butter were provided. But the roof was, unfortunately, not dust-proof. While meals were being eaten, slices of bread became brown in colour; the gravy in the dish thickened, and food, such as butter and jam, tasted strongly of earth. The heat was intense. The thermometer usually registered 98° Fah. at nine a.m., and would rise to many degrees above 100 before three p.m. Outside it was not so bad, for though the wind was hot, it was preferable to the stifling air under canvas. One blessing vouchsafed to the diggers was cool nights, in which comfortable sleep could be enjoyed. At eleven p.m. the thermometer generally stood at 58° Fahr.—a great drop, certainly, and one not perhaps conducive to health.

For some weeks, however, the health of the people was excellent. Then a change came, and in ones and twos men fell beneath the touch of typhoid fever. Sanitary arrangements had been totally neglected, and in and about the camps was a great accumulation of filth. The presence of sickness and death brought to light the fact that there was more destitution on the field than might have been supposed. There were many instances where men were unable to get medical assistance, for they were destitute of means. To aid these poor fellows a sick fund was started, and vested in three trustees. The people subscribed freely, and, to further the object, concerts were held. The first of these is worthy of mention. The place in which it was held was the "Field;" the time, 7.30 p.m. Overhead, a cloudless sky, brilliant with stars; underfoot, the earth, carpeted with bushes and strewn with stones. The wind had fallen, and a great calm prevailed. The air was cool and fresh, and in every way the time was favourable to the project in hand. A four-wheeled waggon represented the stage, and was lighted by lanterns fastened to poles at the four corners. Punctually to the time named, the Warden took the "chair"—that is to say, he climbed into the waggon and seated himself on one of the side-rails. Around the stage stood a dense crowd of men, coatless, and with their shirt-sleeves rolled to the elbow. Every one smoked, and (for the time being) laughed and chatted. But the talk ceased as the Warden rose to his feet and made a speech. He was not a man of many words, but he spoke to the point, and explained the object in aid of which the concert was given; then he called for one of the performers to come forward, and the concert began.

There were comic songs and recitations, and others of a sentimental and pathetic strain. These last appeared to be appreciated more than the humorous ones, but the gems of the evening were rendered by two Germans. The music seemed especially appropriate to the still night and the unconventional surroundings. The crowd listened in rapt attention till the last tones of the men's voices died away; the singers had even time to seat themselves before the applause broke forth. But there was no mistaking it when it did come, for the air shook with the clapping of

hands and the shouts of "Encore! encore!" And there was no cessation until the singers again stood up and sang once again. They were called upon to sing a third time, but the hour was growing late. No highly-trained artist ever received a more genuine compliment than that paid to those two Germans by their fellow-diggers.



AN AL FRESCO CONCERT.

And so from day to day life on the field rolled on, much after the fashion herein set forth. The tide of human beings ebbed and flowed. To-day one might chance to meet a friend, and perhaps never again see him on the field. Teetulpa was a place of trial for human friendships. Men came there in couples; they had known one another for years, maybe, and were sworn friends. But the hardships that

had to be faced brought out the true men, and most frequently it was found that both had faults of temper never before suspected, and which caused the bond that had held them together to be severed. On the other hand, men came there friendless and alone, and before many days had passed they had met their "other self," and with him had thrown in their fortunes. Friendships formed in this way might be guaranteed to last a lifetime. Nor was it uncommon for friends to meet who had not seen one another for many a weary year. Fathers met sons, who possibly, owing to some sudden gust of temper, had left their homes, intending never to return, and often, being thus thrown together in rough companionship, they once more became united.

A characteristic feature, and one which marked the field as distinctly British in comparison to those described by the graphic pen of Bret Harte, was the absence of revolvers and sheath-knives. When disputes arose, as they were bound to do, and when from words the disputants proceeded to blows, they were settled with the fist. Never once was any weapon lifted by one man against another. And one day when there came a youth—he proved to be a barber's apprentice—dressed out after the fashion of a Californian bravo, with silk sash about his waist and revolver and knife hanging on his hip, he was greeted by such a storm of jeers and laughter that he was fain to run to his tent and return weaponless and in his right mind.

The value of the gold obtained during the first six months following the discovery of Teetulpa has been estimated to be over £200,000; but it will never be known in what proportion that sum was divided amongst the men who toiled. After a while the interest in alluvial digging declined, and much attention was then paid to the reefs, many of them yielding promising returns.

LAKE WAKATIPU.

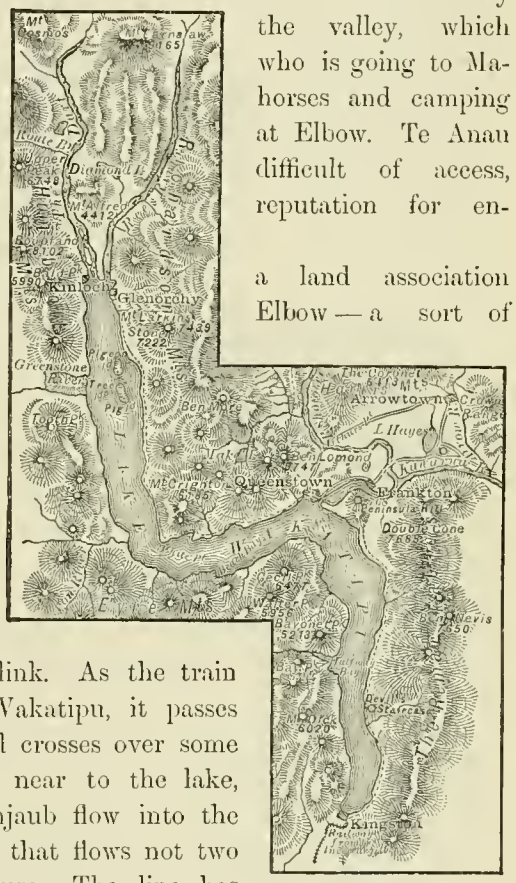
Bluff—By Rail—The Waimea Plains—Kingston—On the Lake—A Legend—Queenstown—Ben Lomond—The "Remarkables"—Frankton—The Kawarau—Terraces—The Shotover—The Head of the Lake—Mount Eamslaw—The Greenstone—Kinloch and Glenorchy—Eternal Snow.

SOUTH New Zealand, which contains some of the most interesting scenery in the world, is approached by steamer from Australia at a little harbour that is called Bluff. The town is called Campbelltown, but the title of the harbour has quite superseded that of the town. Bluff, or The Bluff, is connected with all the chief places in the Southern Island by rail. It may be as well here to say that the island in which Dunedin and Christchurch are situated is sometimes called the Southern and sometimes the Middle Island. Chance seems to direct the use of the name; but there are those who say that Middle is used of craft by those who think that the political capital ought to be in it. Stewart Island is, however, so small in proportion to the others, and so unimportant, that it seems almost ridiculous to use the title Middle. Bluff is not a place where anyone would care to stay, though on the hill that gives the name it is said you may find specimens of every fern that exists in New Zealand. Even the ferns, however, would not reconcile a traveller to a long sojourn, and he is glad to be off to Invercargill by railway, a distance of about eighteen miles. Though small ships come up to Invercargill by a river with the Maori name of Waihopai, Bluff practically is to it what Port Chalmers is to Dunedin and Lyttelton to Christchurch.

The railway system in New Zealand is very complete, and so convenient, that we sometimes forget how new it all is. Sixteen years ago Mr. Anthony Trollope visited this part of the world, and he enjoyed no such advantages as the traveller of to-day. It took him two days' coaching to reach Lake Wakatipu, and then six more to get to Dunedin, though it must be added that on one of the six he helped to dig the coach out of a snowdrift. He was often separated from his dress clothes, which were sent by steamer, and this used to make him unhappy. Now from Invercargill there is a line to the lake, and another line to Dunedin. It is true that only every other day does the train run to the lake even in the tourist season; but even after the loss of time caused by that economy, the time is much better than Mr. Trollope's. Southland, as this part of New Zealand is called, was a province which merged itself into Otago, its neighbour, even before the general suppression of the provincial governments. Invercargill boasts itself to be the nearest town to the South Pole, and is a comfortable and clean town. The streets are, like those in many Australasian cities, exceedingly broad. The second half of the name is the proper name of a leading settler, Captain Cargill, first provincial superintendent of Southland, and the first half certainly suggests Scotland; and it may be said of all this part of New Zealand, of Invercargill as well as Dunedin, Southland as well as Otago, that it is *scotis scotior*. A friend of mine asked a lady lately arrived from "the land of cakes" if she could not fancy herself back in Scotland. She promptly made reply, "Nay, it is worse than Scotland;

there you sometimes meet an Englishman." Need it be added that this is a joke! There are Englishmen in Dunedin and Invercargill, and one or two at the Bluff.

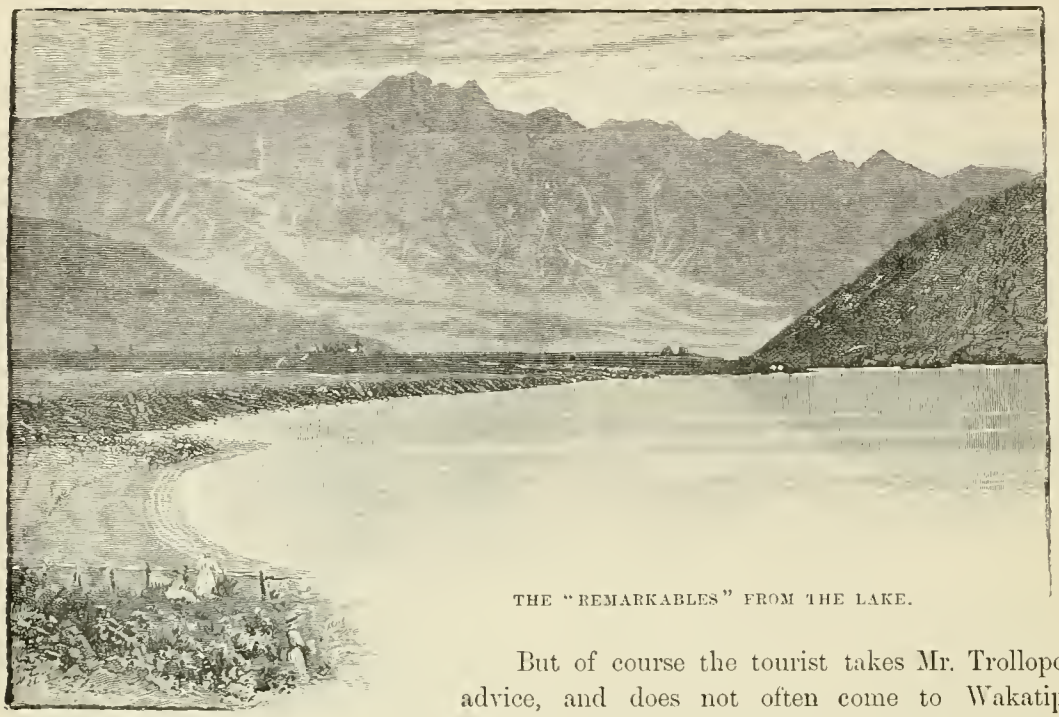
From Invercargill to Lakeland the train runs nearly due north. About halfway along the line there is a junction with what is known as the Waimea Plains line. The point of junction is called indifferently Lumsden or Elbow. The former is the official designation—the name that you will find in *Bradshaw*. The latter is the popular and local name. Why Elbow? The name is older than the railway line, and was given because of the bend in the valley, which makes the curve in the railway. The traveller who is going to Manapouri—an excursion which means saddle-horses and camping out, but also splendid scenery—leaves the train at Elbow. Te Anau also lies to the left of the line, but is very difficult of access, and like all inaccessible things, it has a great reputation for enchanting beauty.



MAP OF THE LAKE.

The Waimea Plains is the name of a land association which made a private line from Gore to Elbow — a sort of loop-line from the Invercargill-Dunedin to the Invercargill-Kingston. The company took up a large tract of land, and then let portions to settlers upon easy terms, so calculated as to leave a profit to the company; but as land in New Zealand fell in value, this profit disappeared, and the company will probably come to an end. The railway line has been purchased by the Government, in whose system it now forms a convenient link. As the train proceeds to Kingston, at the foot of Lake Wakatipu, it passes through a run known as the Five Rivers, and crosses over some of these rivers. Though we are drawing very near to the lake, none of the five that form this southern Punjaub flow into the lake; all are running away from it. A stream that flows not two miles from Kingston is an affluent of the Mataura. The line has been passing up a broad valley, which it is generally believed was the original outlet of the lake; but some great convulsion of nature has blocked this outlet, and the overflow of the Wakatipu water is now much further to the north. Centuries ago the Mataura valley was probably filled by a broad river, but now this end of the lake is blocked by the Kingston moraine. Only at a short distance from Kingston does the train begin to descend. Passengers begin to show eagerness to finish their journey—twelve hours for those who have come from Dunedin—and to obtain the first glimpse of the water. Heads are thrust out of window. Yet there is little to interest in the country, unless excitement can be found in the sight of a score of wicked rabbits.

"And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter morn."



THE "REMARKABLES" FROM THE LAKE.

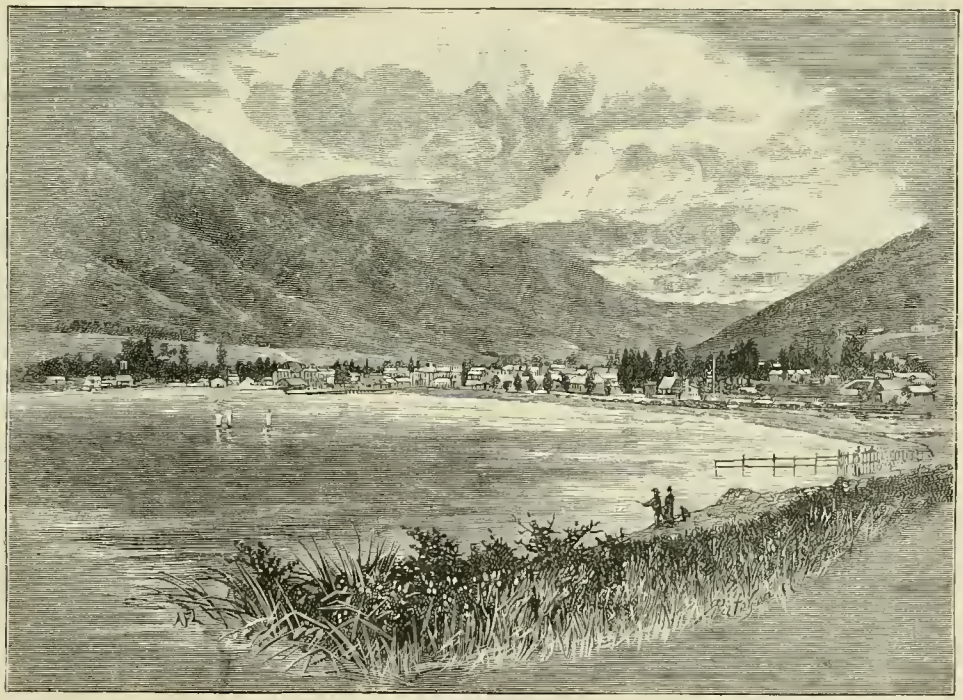
But of course the tourist takes Mr. Trollope's advice, and does not often come to Wakatipu in the winter. No doubt he would have to put up with inconveniences, and should be prepared with warm wraps and a very thick great-coat. But if he can stand the cold, this is what awaits him. The description is that of an eye-witness:—"The sides of the Remarkables are a grand sight in winter. Icicles of an immense length and thickness are seen clustered all along the sides, and stretching their long arms down to the clear cold water; bold, bluff headlands towering to the skies, and capped with eternal snow." Here the summer tourist pauses. If the snow be eternal, he thinks, why is it not capping the headlands all through the summer? It does at the head of the lake, but not here at the foot, and he wisely takes Captain Jackson Barry's description with a grain of salt.

Kingston is a small place, and dull withal. Someone has said of it that, like Mark Tapley's Eden, it would be the better if built. On arriving, no one stops at Kingston; on returning, most are compelled by the time-tables so to do. Two words of warning may prove of advantage. If you take an evening walk, beware of the burrs; they are singularly adhesive. And remember that a wooden hotel is not a satisfactory place for private conversations.

Passengers for Queenstown step on board the steamer *Mountaineer*, on board which, it may be mentioned, careful attention is paid to the commissariat, and the lake trout (a very large and sightly fish) will be prominent on the table. On a fine summer evening, when the moon is shining, the trip of two or three hours from Kingston to Queenstown is most enjoyable. The traveller is soon aware that he is passing through beautiful lake scenery, and would naturally regret if this portion of his journey should fall to be made in the dark, as, however, it often does. Along the eastern side of the

lake, on the side of the Remarkables, there is a track now hardly ever used, except for cattle meant for the Queenstown butchers. At one point it passes up a very steep climb, known as the Devil's Staircase. From the path the descent is almost sheer, yet sometimes it is said the cattle are seized by panic, and have rushed headlong down into the lake.

A Maori legend is sometimes told with respect to the origin of Lake Wakatipu—that in the days of old a giant was burnt, and that the bed of the lake was formed by the fire. He must have been a wonderfully large giant, for the lake is fifty-six miles long. The shape might be rather compared to a man sitting than to a man lying down. He would be sitting on the Eyre Mountains. Another comparison would be to half a capital H—the lower right limb and the upper left, together with the cross-bar. The two limbs are of about equal length—twenty-four miles each, the distance from Kingston to Queenstown. The total area of the lake has been calculated at 117 square miles. This gives an average breadth of a little more than two miles. Nowhere is the breadth greater than four miles. It may be as well here to say that the final syllable of Wakatipu—a Maori name—is never sounded. The names of hills and streams and lakelets round the lake have been given in our usual English haphazard fashion, with our usual poverty of invention and even vulgarity. The name of the lake and that of the river that drains it—Wakatipu and Kawarau—are the only Maori names. There are some musical names; some simply taken from the British Isles; some appear elsewhere, even in New Zealand, as Ben More. Cecil and Walter are the two Christian names of a young gentleman in Queenstown. Who Humboldt was need hardly be told.



QUEENSTOWN.

nor why Cosmos is one of his mountains. Mr. Rees was a station-holder, and Von, it need hardly be added, is simply the handle of the name of a German gentleman, his full name being too long for general use. One pretty little lake, poor thing, is actually known as Moke!

Round the lake, with the exception of Queenstown, there is no place—call it township or village—with more than a few houses. Queenstown came into existence as a mining township. As gold was discovered all round in the district, a town sprang up in the place most conveniently central for obtaining supplies. Nothing could be better than the position of Queenstown. But if the little town thus began its life, its future is far more likely to be connected with tourists in search of the picturesque. On the Swiss and Italian lakes, and on the Cumberland lakes, there are various towns that owe their prosperity to a short season in each year, when the town is crowded. For the rest of the year the place is empty. For Queenstown three months is the outside limit of this season; but if a census of population had to be taken, it would make a great difference in the record of Queenstown whether it fell in the season or out of the season. The time to reach the conclusion that Queenstown is a populous place is on the arrival of the boat from Kingston. Perhaps the time is nearly eleven o'clock on a summer night; but everyone seems to be about, on the little pier or near it, so that the new arrival has to shoulder his way through a crowd that is very inquisitive. No one seems to come to Queenstown by any other route, and that steamer is the link with the outer world. It brings the newspapers and the letters, perhaps the English mail. How, until it has been safely moored, could the inhabitants be expected to go to bed?

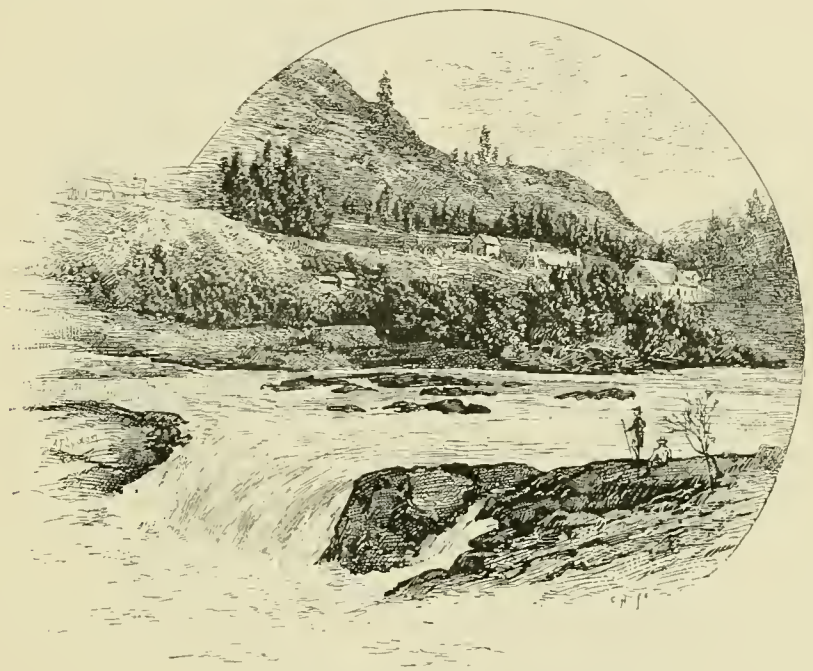
In the same way, in an Australian bush-town everyone used to turn out to see the coach come in; and now that even the smallest town has its railway, the inhabitants regard the railway platform as the proper place for a promenade, whilst the arrival of a train corresponds with the playing of the band at an English watering-place.

The visitor to Queenstown will be told at once that the proper thing to do is to ascend Ben Lomond. It is to be presumed that he or she knows his or her own mind, and will not undertake the task merely because it is expected. The visitors' book at the hotel is full of comments upon the climb; and some of the climbers are contented, some are discontented. Most are anxious to chronicle the shortest ascent on record, and one mentions that he ran down in fifty-five minutes. The truth is, that to experienced climbers the mountain is nothing—"a mere Cockney affair," said one, "some 4,500 feet above the hotel; but many attempt it who have not had practice, and are not in good wind. These oftentimes lament. But all allow that, if the weather be clear, the view is superb. Lastly, let it be added, that, though nearest to the Queenstown hotels, Ben Lomond is not monarch of the Wakatipu Mountains. Round the lake there are twenty loftier peaks.

The hills upon the traveller's right as he comes from Kingston, and the most prominent from Queenstown, are the Remarkables, certainly a very interesting range of mountains. Their official name, Hector, is but seldom used. There is very little vegetation on them; their tops are bare and bleak, and the lower slopes on the side of the lake or river are little better. The line of hilltops is serrated, and has been compared

MARTIN'S BAY TRACK.

by travellers to the Sierra Nevada, which are visible from the deck of a steamer as it passes the south of Spain. The saw, it must be confessed, slopes away quickly, is very irregular, and has its teeth broken and jagged. The highest peak is called Double Cone, and to the south is a peak called Ben Nevis, higher above sea-level than the Scotch Ben Nevis, as Ben Lomond is higher than the Scotch Ben Lomond. Tourists at Queenstown have ere now misjudged the height of Double Cone, which stands some 6,500 feet above the level of the lake. They have set forth to climb, but have been baffled. The attempt cost one pair of tourists a night in the cold. The peaks are not indeed inaccessible from every side, but they are from the side of the lake. No! The



AT FRANKTON.

Remarkables must be gazed upon, not attacked. At first they are not friendly; but they have beautiful sights in store for eyes that love changes of colour, as wrought by falling snow or passing cloud. When the clouds are dark, the hills look almost black and very grim. Even in the midsummer month their tops are often covered, or at least sprinkled, with snow, for rain in the valley means snow on the heights. Frequently thin, fleecy clouds hang over them. Sometimes they are completely shrouded. Generally the mountain sides present a rich Vandyke brown. The present writer was privileged to see them at their best one summer evening towards the end of January, as he was walking after sunset along the road by the Frankton arm. The sun had set to those by the lake, when suddenly from behind the western hills its rays shot forth, lighting up the tops of the Remarkables with the most beautiful colours. The iron peaks were glorified by a red sunset glow. To the right of the topmost peak lay a

patch of snow, pink with the tinge of the dying sunlight, and offering a brilliant contrast to another patch not far off that the sun did not touch.

Beneath the shadow of the Remarkables is the present outlet of the lake, the Frankton arm, that runs east from Queenstown. At the south-eastern corner of this "arm" the lake, as the phrase goes, "empties itself" into the Kawarau. It is more true to describe it as an overflow, for the lake does not empty. The spot, which is well worth a visit, is known as the Kawarau Falls; but there is not much of a fall. "Rapids" would be a more suitable name. When the river is at all full a boat could shoot the rapids, but it would be better perhaps that nervous people should not be seated in the boat. Just below there stands a mill which makes use of the water-power, and upon the opposite side are the buildings of a station that has suffered much from rabbit depredation, known as Kawarau Falls Station The visitor can take up his position by the side of the mill, and observe the rush of the water as it swirls past. If he knew the lake previously, and has seen the two rivers at the head pour in, as well as smaller rivers, such as the Greenstone, he will certainly come to the conclusion that more water comes into the lake than issues from it. There are those who maintain that the difference cannot be accounted for by evaporation, and believe in some channel beneath the surface that carries off the surplus. This, however, is, and must remain, mere conjecture. The lake is very deep, and the usual tradition is that it cannot be fathomed. This is hardly the case, though it may be true that in parts there are depths not yet sounded. The average depth is 1,300 feet. As the surface is about a thousand feet above the level of the sea, this makes the bottom of the lake reach below the sea-level. Much of the water of the lake is glacier water, and in consequence it is very cold. You will be told that no one who falls into the lake ever rises again. This can hardly mean that no one can swim in the water, for bathing in the lake is by no means unknown. But woe betide the man who tumbles in by accident, or is any way entangled. Accidents are not uncommon. Once an unfortunate ship's cook, engaged in the duties of his office, fell overboard from the *Mountaineer*. His body was never seen again. At another time a man was leading a horse into the water to wash and refresh him. The horse going too far suddenly fell over the ledge of a terrace, and the man trying to save the horse was pulled in by it. After a fortnight or three weeks the body of the horse was seen again, but the man's body was never recovered for the purposes of an inquest. The explanation offered is that the water is not buoyant like salt water, that the body sinks through sudden numbness, and is then kept down by the great weight of the water.

In the last story mention has been made of the terraces. Terraces are one of the most common features of New Zealand scenery, and they are usually attributed to the action of water. A line of terrace is clearly visible round the lake a good many feet above its present level. This is believed to be the former level in the days when the outlet was at Kingston. If, however, a terrace always marks a former water level, there must have been a time when the lake was smaller than now, as well as when it was larger, for a line of terrace below the present level is clearly discernible—the terrace which cost that poor horse and his owner their lives. For a few feet from

the shore the water is shallow, then it suddenly deepens. The Terrace formation is, however, by no means peculiar to the lake. A little below the outlet, which forms the River Kawarau, that river is joined by the Shotover, and in the lower valley of the Shotover is a most remarkable terrace, as regular as if it were an escarped fortification made by the hands of a corps of engineers. This is perhaps the most marked instance, but a visitor who keeps his eyes open will see terraces all round him.

MOUNT EARNSLAW.

Mr. Vincent Pyke, a local writer of some note, begins a story with the following:—"High up amongst the mountains of Western Otago are those interesting fragments of a pre-historic world, familiarly known as 'The Terraces,' built up grain upon grain, and pebble upon pebble, by Nature's plastic hand, in that remote period when the interior of Otago consisted of a vast series of lakes, severed from each other sometimes by intervening ranges, sometimes by huge moraines. . . . The more ancient of the Terraces are about 500 feet above the level of the yet existing lakes—Hawea, Wanaka, and Wakatipu—but they, in geological argot, have been so 'degraded' and 'eroded' in the course of time, that their position and outlines are barely traceable by

the educated and practical eye. Lower down there are others so fresh and smooth, so mathematically true in their proportions and so perfect in form, that they seem comparatively the work of yesterday. Time has wrought but little change in them. Yet an incalculable space of time must have elapsed since they formed the beds and margins of the great lakes by whose agency they were deposited as we now behold them. Far below their surface the rivers now find their way to the sea through rocky gorges, cut by the irresistible glaciers, which ground and tore the opposing mountains in their onward path, leaving everywhere the scars whereby their action is made manifest to the readers of the stone Bible."

The Shotover—to return to that dashing stream—evidently received its name from some Oxford man, remembering the green slopes of the beautiful hill that lies to the south-east of Oxford, dear to all Oxonians who took walking exercise. It is not, perhaps, everyone who knows that the name is a corruption of Château Vert. With respect to this name, a curious linguistic experiment may be suggested. Ask a Chinaman of the neighbourhood—and there are plenty to ask—the name of the river. His answer will be very like the original French pronunciation, which is a strange coincidence. The Chinamen are gold-diggers, content with patiently washing what European miners have left. They are also market-gardeners—growers of vegetables. Hard by the Shotover valley some are trying to raise tobacco, but with no satisfactory result. A good deal of gold has been extracted from the bed of the Shotover, and of the Arrow, another affluent of the Kawarau, but the days of alluvial gold-fields are pretty well over. The gold extracting of the neighbourhood is now chiefly quartz reefing. High up on the hill-side there is a little creek called Skippers, on the banks of which there is plenty of mining. The inhabitants are very proud of one mine, because it is lit with the electric light, which is assuredly a great improvement even upon the safety lamp. To climb up to Skippers is a long pull, and not recommended to the tourist unconnected with mining, who will probably know better and more accessible mines that he can visit, if his fancy urges him to venture into the bowels of the earth. Most ordinary mortals are satisfied with a single venture of the kind; but if the visitor go to Skippers, and still remain not satisfied, there is Macetown, another mining place, difficult of access and picturesque, situated up the valley of the Arrow. Below Arrowtown, or Arrow, as the name is now generally abbreviated, there has been plenty of digging. The little place has a sort of Bret Harte look, and no doubt all about there were some wild scenes then in the sixties. Roaring Meg and Gentle Annie are names given by playful miners to creeks further down the Kawarau; and Cromwell, where the Kawarau joins the Clutha, came into being as a mining township. The lust for gold brought thousands thither, and doubtless many there had, perforce, to "fling away ambition." But—to descend from Shakespeare to the guide-book—it may be mentioned that a coach goes from Queenstown nightly to Arrow, and at stated intervals to Cromwell. But the coach takes visitors away from the lake, to which we must now return.

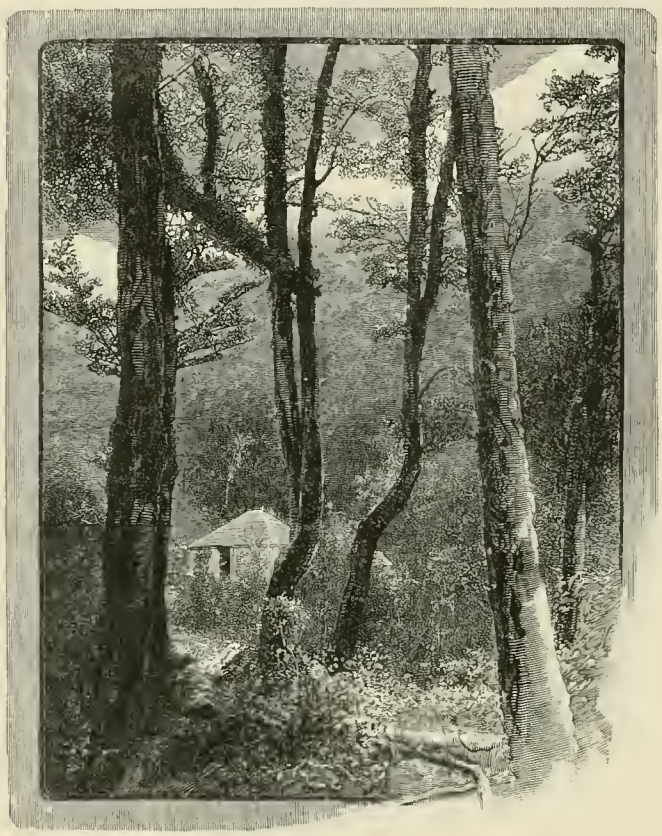
The most beautiful part of Lake Wakatipu is the Head of the Lake, which the steamer company offer easy facilities to visit. In making the trip up the lake, the best part of the scenery opens out to view as the steamer passes the little group of islands, Pigeon, Pig, and One Tree. There is opened to the eye a panorama of snow-

clad peaks, and this is considered the most beautiful view in all the lake district. The greatest of all the mountains is Earnslaw, over 9,000 feet high, and as yet a virgin-peak. Mr. Green and his Swiss guides attempted its ascent in the year 1883; but he was hard-pressed for time, and the day that he could spare was unfortunate, so that Earnslaw repulsed those who had defeated the sky-piercing Cook. Since Mr. Green's visit, others have reached some thousand feet higher, but the summit has never been trodden by the foot of man. It is very evident that Mr. Green has by no means exhausted the possibilities of New Zealand for the Alpine climber. There are many achievements in these Southern Alps calling for the adventurous; many reputations are to be made by those who understand the craft of climbing, and entertain a real love for it. Climbing upon glacier mountains, it need hardly be said, is not within everybody's compass, and should not be attempted by those who have not served an apprenticeship to it. It is only in Switzerland and the countries adjacent that men can truly learn the craft. This is the reason why we must look to European experience for those who are to scale New Zealand peaks. Many members of the English Alpine Club have plenty of money and plenty of time, and it is to be hoped that before very long the club, or some of its members, will fit out a thoroughly-equipped exploring expedition, bring experienced guides and proper appliances, and thoroughly investigate the higher New Zealand geography. There is something fascinating about being the first to stand upon a mountain-top, and many a man would like to be at the christening of peaks. There are passes to be discovered between the lake country and the Sounds on the West coast. If Alpine climbers come, it is certain that they will receive a hearty welcome in New Zealand; but they must give themselves a better allowance of time than Mr. Green.

Nearly opposite the little islands is the mouth of the Greenstone River, called after the beautiful stone by which the Maoris set store, and of which they patiently carved images of heroic and deified ancestors. It is said to be hardest of stones after the diamond, and a visitor to New Zealand should secure a piece as a keepsake. Probably the stone used to be found in this river valley. A mile above the mouth, the river passes through a beautiful little lake, called Rere, somewhat difficult to visit, as the Greenstone is out of the steamer's usual course, and a visit would require that the steamer should wait at least an hour. Up the Greenstone valley runs a track, uniting in the mountains with that up the Dart and Route burn, for the adventurous few who wish to cross to the West coast.

Two rivers, both glacier-fed, enter the lake at its head, the Rere and the Dart. The former is called after a gentleman who formerly owned a station on the shores of the lake; the other after the beautiful river in South Devonshire, though there is a great difference between the tawdry pretty scenery at home and the wild mountain gorge down which the Southern namesake dashes. On either side of the lake there is a small settlement, and there is a considerable feud between the two places, Kinloch and Glenorchy. Those who stay at one scorn the other. The following opinion is offered as a compromise. Kinloch is the prettier place—just the spot for a honey-moon; but the hill rises so precipitously behind it that fewer excursions can be made.

Glenorchy is the more convenient. Up the Dart valley goes the track, before mentioned, to Martin's Bay; but it is advisable to remember that the track is easily lost, and that it is a very difficult expedition to go from the lake to the West coast. Lives have been lost in the enterprise. Some day there will be a road and a line of coaches, so that visitors to the Sounds will finish their trip at Martin's Bay, now a miserable place, which will then have a large hotel in the foreground. But the time for all this is not yet. From Glenorchy, on the other side, start those who are bold enough to attempt Mount Earnslaw. There is also a good drive to Diamond Lake and Paradise Flat, that lies beyond.

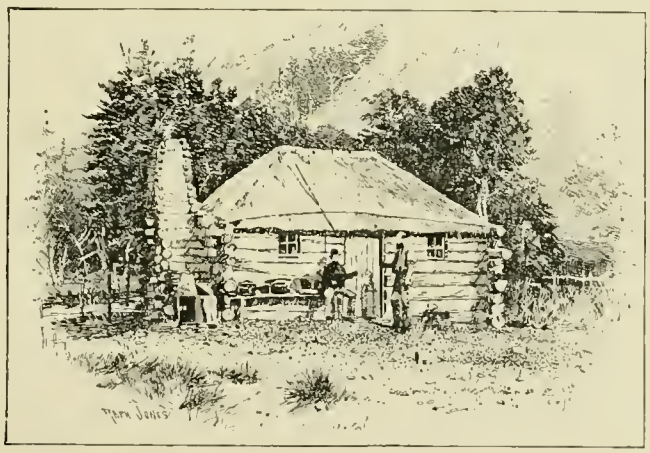


SCENERY NEAR THE LAKE.

No doubt appreciative visitors part from Lake Wakatipu with the feeling that Mr. Green is right in describing it as "amazingly beautiful." He tells his readers that only one lake in Switzerland stands before it—Lucerne. One who knows both cannot help feeling that the suggested comparison is not altogether wise. To classify lakes in a sort of order of merit is not satisfactory—much less is it helpful to quote Byron on Lake Leman or some other Swiss lake, and substitute the Maori name. Wakatipu waits its own poet, who will come in due time. Mr. Trollope's remark is much better, and more useful. He said that he could not imagine finer lake scenery than Wakatipu, though he could easily imagine prettier. The fine scenery and the pretty scenery are alike worthy of praise. Americans who visit England are delighted with the quiet prettiness of English downs and copses, and tell of their ineffable charm. Englishmen visit America, and burst forth into rapture with respect to the boundless uncultivated prairie and the primeval forest. If a critic may be allowed a suggestion, it would be that what the country round Wakatipu lacks is softness—something that speaks of the presence of man. A few cornfields on those bare hills, some signs of cultivation on those treeless slopes, would relieve the colour and improve the general aspect. When man has succeeded in conquering the prolific rabbit, some of these signs of man's existence may appear.

These southern lakes are separated only by a few miles of mountains from the West Coast Sounds, to which they bear a singular resemblance, and at the same time offer a striking contrast. The traveller who has crossed the Southern Alps by the Otira Gorge will remember a similar phenomenon. The famous gorge is on the western side of the watershed, but on both sides the approach to the top of the pass is by steep gorges. On the western side there is rich sub-tropical vegetation; the Otira is almost the wonder of the world for richness of colour, for infinite variety, and for all that constitutes charm. The eastern side is bare, or almost bare, and where there are trees they lack colour, they lack variety, and to this extent they lack charm. The contrast between Wakatipu and the Sounds is similar. From the Head of the Lake to Milford Sound is as the crow flies less than twenty miles; it is less than thirty from the middle of Wakatipu to George Sound. The lakes, like the Sounds, are long and narrow; their sides are steep and precipitous. In the background are the snow peaks. In these points the two are like: as at the Otira the difference lies in the vegetation. On the west there is the extraordinary wealth of moss, of flower, of fern, of shrub, of tree; on the east, bare treeless hill-sides, bleak, rocky mountain tops, somewhat repellent at first, yet after a while attracting and arresting the nature lover with a grandeur of their own.

Before you return to the common world, look back once more northward to the Head of the Lake as the steamer takes you from the sight of it. If the right of the panorama be bare, the hill above Kinlock is clothed with the native birches. The feeding rivers seem to issue from a mysterious distance. Between them Mount Alfred stands distinct in the foreground. Behind, amidst others, are the mighty mountains Cosmos and Earnslaw. Perhaps the snow summit stands forth in clear blue sky; perhaps a fleecy cloud hangs over it; perhaps—and then it is "amazingly beautiful"—the peak has a framing of white cloud outside the sky, setting forth the summit like a picture with a background of blue. In a beautiful word-picture that Ruskin has painted, after a glowing description of the beauties that lie nearer earth, this is the last touch: "And far beyond and far above all these, fainter than the morning cloud, yet purer and changeless, lay the utmost peaks of the eternal snow."



LOG HUT NEAR THE LAKE.

GIPPSLAND.

Terra Incognita—Count Strezlecki and Angus M'Millan—Forest Depths—Coal and Gold—Sale—Stratford—The Latrobe—The Lakes—Night on the Water—The Mitchell River—Ninety-mile Beach—Fighting the Sea—Kalimna—Birds—Lake Tyers—"Fables"—The Inhabitants.

AUSTRALIAN CRANE.

GIPPSLAND—Caledonia Australis—for years was the least-known portion of the colony of Victoria—a veritable *terra incognita*. Long before Angus M'Millan and Count Strezlecki penetrated its fastnesses and observed its noble capabilities for settlement, Sir Thomas Mitchell had looked over the beautiful green pastures of the western district and conferred upon the future colony the title of Australia Felix. But the earlier explorers of the far eastern part of the colony, who only saw mountain solitudes and lower lands of an apparently impassable nature in their search after fresh country, were destined to add to the colony of Victoria the richest and most fertile of her lands.

It has until more recent years been a moot point whether Count Strezlecki or Angus M'Millan was he to whom the guerdon of its explorer should be awarded; but there is small doubt that to the stout-hearted Scot is due the principal merit of discovering and making known the capabilities of Gippsland. There is no little romance in the story of his journeyings from the Manaro Country, where his patron Captain Macalister had a station; of hair-breadth 'scapes by flood and field while in search of fresh pastures. But this is scarcely the place in which to record the hardships through which he passed with his few followers—hardships which culminated in adding a new province to Victoria. It may suffice to say that he did surmount all dangers and difficulties; and when he looked over the vast and fertile plains of the future Gippsland, with their boundaries of mountain and of flood, he recorded his feelings in language which certainly deserves to be preserved:—"The prospect before me was beautifully grand, bringing kindly to my recollection my native home, or the land of the mountain and the flood, when it struck me that the most appropriate name for it was Caledonia Australis.'"

M'Millan named the Lakes Wellington and Victoria, Lake King having been christened by Strezlecki. Afterwards, in 1841, he pushed his way to Port Albert, where, as the chronicles tell, he enjoyed the luxury of "supping the salt-water out of his Highland bonnet." We must not pause to chronicle the struggles of the early settlers—the Brodribbs, the Campbells, the Pearsons, the Raymonds, Reeve, Thomson, and Cuninghame,

the McLeans and the Frasers, all stout of heart and strong of hand—many of whom, with their descendants, have found a home in Gippsland. Yet it would be ungracious to omit all reference to the early pioneers; and the foregoing may serve in some measure as an overture to the panorama.

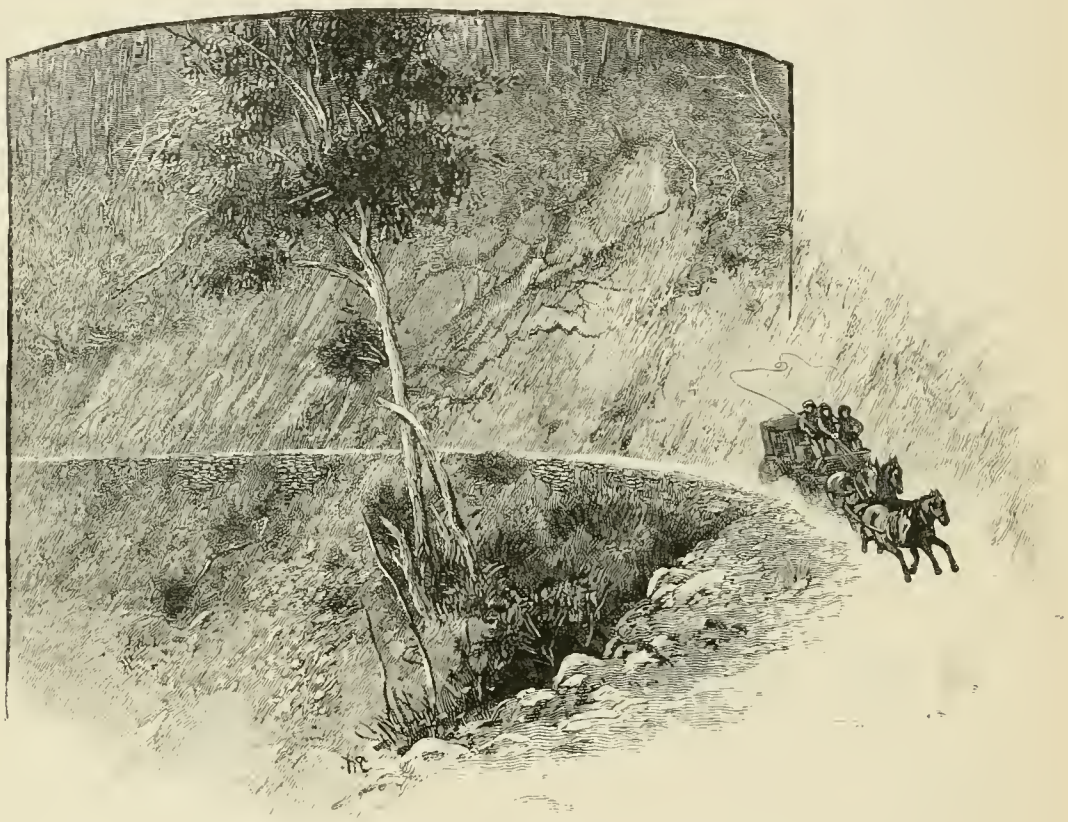
The visitor to Gippsland in these modern days has little more to do than to mark out his route, take his ticket at the Melbourne terminus, and by the aid of railway, steamer, and coach, he can speedily transport himself to scenes which are enchanting, and which but a few years since were only unfolded to the admiring gaze of the adventurous explorer. The traveller in search of the picturesque takes the train for Sale, the present capital of Gippsland. He has about a hundred and thirty miles of journey before him, and it is not accomplished at so headlong a speed that he is unable to survey and comprehend the leading features of the ever-changing landscape.

Passing by the suburbs of Melbourne almost before he has had time to comfortably arrange his wraps or cut his daily paper, the pretty township of Berwick presents itself. This hamlet is taken by a great many people to in some way mark the commencement of Gippsland territory; and it is quite possible that even Gippslanders themselves, noting its home-like appearance, and observing how it nestles amongst its surrounding hills, might wink at the supposition. But Gippsland proper does not begin until the forests about Longwarry and Drouin are reached. Here, branching from the railroad-track, the traveller finds himself encircled by almost impenetrable walls of timber, apparently sky-reaching, and so thickly set together that to stray to the right hand or the left from the narrow track appears impossible. The undergrowth of ferns and mosses is rich and luxuriant. Scarcely a sound is heard, save the ring of the woodman's axe or the startled cry of some forest-bird. Here is

> "Vastness of verdurous solitude, forest complexity boundless,
> Where is no stir, save the fall of a leaf or the wave of a wing;
> Lone sunny regions, where virginal Nature roams ceaseless and soundless,
> Rich with the richness of summer, yet fresh with the freshness of spring."

Perhaps one of the most interesting sights of forest-depths such as these is to be found at the local saw-mill. The evidence of labour given by the paths, which have been literally hewn out of the closely-surrounding woods—by the felling of trees which grew in such close juxtaposition that it became a matter of doubt whether they ever could be "felled" in the real sense of the word—pays ample tribute to the skill and perseverance of the foresters; and there is a peculiar pungency in the odour of the fresh sawdust, which is as refreshing as are all woodland scents. Generally around such establishments there is a sense of homeliness. Surrounding the bush saw-mill are the homes of the workmen. Neat and tidy such habitations invariably are, with their patches of garden gay with bright flowers. The creeper which runs up the wall speaks of the cultivation of a sense of beauty unknown to the dwellers in the mean and dingy terraces of large centres. The presence of rosy-cheeked children (returning maybe from the school whose white walls may be dimly descried in the distance, and which on occasion serves for "church") adds a charm to a picture which, seen in these forest fastnesses, is not likely to be easily effaced from memory.

Evening in the forest, too, is generally a solemn time. The red tints of the setting sun gild the forest pillars and ascend to the topmost branches. Presently the harsh cry of the nightbirds ceases, and only the mysterious noises of the woods disturb the tired sleeper. Further along the line to Sale, in the rich Mirboo district, coal has been discovered. Now coal-mining in Gippsland is as yet so much in its infancy, that no chasms rend the earth, no blackened tracts disfigure it, no tall chimney-stack belches



THE FLOUR BAG CUTTING ON THE ROAD TO WALHALLA.

out sulphurous vapours; all that is to come. A visit to a Gippsland coal-mine (or rather to a spot at which a seam has been exposed) forms about as picturesque a trip as can be undertaken.

One of the seams that have been opened is in a lovely gully, at whose head is a slight acclivity mantled with living green. Lovely tree-ferns stud the valley, down whose centre ripples a clear brook. It is a bower fit for the fairies, and so has thought many a merry picnic party. But the time may come when the lovely valley will be turned into a wilderness. Right and left from the railway-line at this portion of the journey the profusest wealth of the forest discloses itself. Tramways have been driven into the adjacent country, and afford an easy means of exploring its recesses, in which prodigal Nature

LAKE KING.

runs riot. Pursuing the journey to Sale, the tourist, if so he chooses, may branch off at Moe or Traralgon to Walhalla, and, whichever route is selected, the grandest scenery will be disclosed. Walhalla is *the* gold-mining locality of Gippsland. Here is located the richest mine in Victoria. It is situated on Stringers' Creek, in a valley enclosed by steep mountain ascents, and it has accomplished the feat of returning to its fortunate shareholders over £1,000,000 in dividends, besides providing hundreds of industrious working miners with good wages for years past. The shock of the quartz-battery rouses the echoes of the mountains for miles round. But it is with the route thither that the tourist at present has to do. From either point of departure mentioned the scenery on the road to Walhalla is grandly magnificent. The country ascends gradually until what is known as "The Coppermine" is reached, and there passengers by buggy or coach evince a desire to trust to their own powers of locomotion, for the mountain "sidelings" are steep, and glimpses are obtained of the valley hundreds of feet below. This is the valley of the Thomson River, which winds beneath like a silver thread. Pile upon pile rise the hills, until they mingle their azure with that of the sky itself, and faintly in the distance tower their peaks. Lovely as is the distance, the traveller will find materials of more substantial beauty where he stands.

The surrounding vegetation is of the loveliest character; orchids of rare varieties and the splendid Australian heaths (the crimson and the white epacris) clothe the ground; while flowering shrubs abound on every hand—a thing of beauty is this Walhalla track. No traveller who takes a lingering look at the gorgeous picture spread before him ever forgets it. Seen in the sheen of summer, with the pure ambient air mellowing all around, the prospect is charming; but it is even grander seen on a clear day in winter, when the distant hills are capped with snow, while wreaths of white mist half hide the nearer valleys. The wealth of vegetation is not always an unmixed benefit, as witness the case of the Walhalla coach encircled in a bush-fire in 1884, when passengers, horses, and mails were only saved by the most heroic exertions. That experience, fortunately, is not a frequent one.

Rosedale, the town nearest to Sale on the railway-line, is a typical hamlet which has seen its best days. Time was when it was rendered lively by the stream of waggons and bullock-drays which passed through it laden with goods for Sale or the Alpine diggings; but the railway has changed all that, and Rosedale nestles amongst its orchards—the world forgetting, by the world forgot. The Glengarry ripples by Rosedale as meekly as streams can ripple. Then for the railway-traveller come twenty uninteresting miles, were it not for the fact that from the carriage-window views of the ever-changing Alps can be obtained. Then Sale, which is not only the capital of Gippsland, but the terminus of the Gippsland line, and the head of the navigation of the famed Gippsland lakes, is reached. It is from hence that the searcher after the picturesque really departs on his quest.

The town, which possesses some 5,000 inhabitants, is situated upon the River Thomson; the stream not far back described as winding like a thread between the ranges, is here a navigable river. With it, about three miles below the town, the

Glengarry forms a junction, and the two rivers wedded together are called the Latrobe, which falls into Lake Wellington ten miles off. To the north rise the Alps sixty or eighty miles away; to the south is the Southern Ocean, only twenty miles distant as the crow flies. The lap of the surf as it beats on the Ninety-mile Beach can often be heard in Sale on calm nights.

The immediate surroundings of the capital of Gippsland are not pretty, but the country which lies between Sale and the mountains has not inaptly been called the "Lombardy of Victoria." Sale has led the way as far as boring for water is concerned, and possesses an artesian water-supply, the well being one of the lions of the town. The public gardens are prettily wooded—imported trees flourish lustily in this climate; and the adjacent river is a favourite resort of fly-fishers, capital sport being obtained. Surrounding Sale are enormous tracts of splendid agricultural and grazing land; and the adjacent townships of Maffra, on the Macalister, and Stratford, on the appropriately-named Avon, are thriving localities.

The Avon deserves its name ("soft-flowing Avon, by whose silver stream," as Garrick has it), for it is the counterpart of an English stream. The Stratford folk like to keep up the association with the other Stratford in "Shakespeare's county." The local hotel is called "The Swan," and not far away is an estate named "Charlecote." Near Stratford is the aboriginal station known as Ramahyuck, where the remnants of the fast dying-out tribe of Gippsland blacks are cared for, under the superintendence of an excellent Moravian missionary, the Rev. F. A. Hagenauer. A visit to Ramahyuck is part of the regular programme of picturesque Gippsland.

The lakes will next claim the attention of the reader. It is an easy matter to explore them, thanks to the fast and comfortable boats of the Lakes Navigation Company, which annually convey thousands of pleasure-seekers to scenes which certainly cannot be equalled in Australia. No sooner has the *Omeo* left the wharf than the scenery changes in a magical manner. The boat is on a broad deep stream whose banks are clothed with verdure to the water's edge.

This is the Latrobe, previously alluded to as formed by the junction of the Thomson and the Glengarry. On either hand stretch morasses which, covered with water in winter, in summer form magnificent pastures, about which roam cattle, whose sleek, contented appearance sufficiently betokens the quality of the herbage. Rounding a bend, the steamer enters upon a clear unbroken stretch of water, perhaps a mile in length, glassy as a millpool, the blue of the azure sky reflected upon its bosom, and mirroring twig and leaf and rustling reed which grow upon its edges as in a looking-glass. Aquatic birds rise lazily as the boat throbs onwards; a hawk sails overhead, his double in the water beneath; a scent is wafted from aromatic herbs which clothe all these rivers; all Nature is at peace, and the scene is very beautiful. Presently is passed a schooner, in charge of a fiery little tug, bearing goods to Sale; anon a solitary fly-fisher is left rocking in his little craft, as the swell caused by the steamer's screw catches it and tosses it like a cork. It does not disturb the equanimity of the angler, who pursues his sport, and before the salutations waved to him are over, there is a flash, a whirr of the reel, and a glittering prize in a landing-net. Less than a dozen

miles of travelling such as this and Lake Wellington, the largest of the Gippsland lakes, is reached. It has an area of 35,400 acres. Away to the north tower the hills of the Australian Alps, presenting an ever-changing picture. Baw-Baw, Mount Useful, Ben Cruachan, Mount Wellington, Castlehill, are all familiar objects in the landscape. For months in the year they are snow-clad, and the view of their long sweep from the steamer's deck is perfect. The lake is apparently land-locked, and were it not for the magnificent prospect of the mountains, the journey across it would be uninteresting enough, despite the enormous numbers of black swan, ducks, and other birds which disport on its surface, sometimes collecting in such numbers as to resemble islands in the expanse. But after a run of a dozen miles an opening presents itself, and the boat shoots into M'Lellan's Straits. "Straits," as they are called, are peculiarities of the lakes. M'Lellan's unites Lake Wellington and Lake Victoria, and M'Millan's Straits performs the same office for Lake Victoria and Lake King.

The boat glides into an expanse of perfectly smooth water fringed with ti-tree and rush, which bow their tall heads, in response to the "wash" of the steamer, in a graceful yet fantastic manner. Every now and again an opening in the wall of ti-tree discloses a little picture of surpassing beauty framed by Nature's own kindly hands. For a peep is afforded of some back-water or glassy pool covered with swans sailing about in pairs, and looking like stately frigates by the side of the lesser grebes, or of the teal and black duck, which share their happy solitudes. A blast upon the steam-whistle will scare millions into flight; and there is no prettier sight than a flight of black swan, for then the pure white of their under-pinions is exposed, and glistens like snow in the sun. Little cygnets, like balls of fluff, paddle desperately for the sedges, but all seem to recognise that they have been the victims of a false alarm, and in a few minutes the picture has re-arranged itself. For half-a-dozen miles the straits extend; beauty after beauty is disclosed; but the eye, thanks to the exquisite green of the vegetation, never wearies—and, indeed, nothing could be less monotonous.

Presently the trees and the reeds get thinner on the banks, the trees cease, the reeds stand out in lessening numbers, till only a solitary flag on either side tells that the straits have been passed through, and that Lake Victoria has been entered. Back from Lakes Wellington and Victoria lie fertile lands, but the lakes themselves support a thriving population who live on their shores, but pursue their business upon the waters. Animation is given to the scene by the boats of the fishermen, their sails gleaming white in the sun. They waylay the steamers on the downward trip to pick up the empty baskets flung overboard to them; they intercept them on the upward trip to place on board the harvest of the deep. Thousands of baskets of excellent fish annually reach the Melbourne markets from the Gippsland lakes. Lake Victoria possesses features which Lake Wellington does not. The former is longer, but narrower, and bold bluffs jut out here and there, of which Storm Point and the Red Bluff are notable examples.

Sunset on the lakes is always to be admired. Whether the ruler of the day dips in yellow splendour, gilding the sparkling waves before his final disappearance, or whether he sets, as when bush-fires are raging, a dreadful ball of red fire, tinging

the water with a bloody hue, or whether, as sometimes in winter, when the sky is crossed and barred by shafts of green and yellow and crimson uniting upon the water in indescribable tints—sunset is always a distinct feature while travelling upon the lakes After the disappearance of the last trembling flicker of declining day, sometimes

GENERAL VIEW OF WALHALLA.

a ghastly twilight sets in, a mingling of water and sky that has an indefinable charm, but happy the traveller who sees the full moon rise.

Should the night be very dark, a display of fireworks from the funnels begins which outrivals all the efforts of professional pyrotechnists. For the lake-boats burn wood, and the sparks rush out in such scarlet rout as would have considerably astonished old Tubal Cain himself. They are wafted high into the heavens, gyrate for a while in space, and then, swift as an arrow and almost as straight, plunge into the

dark waters to be extinguished for ever. The pretty fishing village of Paynesville is in M'Millan's Straits. That the sea is being neared is evidenced by the changed colour of the water and the unmistakable odour of seaweed. It is here that most of the fishermen live, and their huts, with a public-house or so, form quite a considerable settlement. Across the strait is Raymond Island, dear to sportsmen; further on in that direction the beautiful Back Lakes and the Southern Ocean.

From this little fishing hamlet three routes diverge—the one to Bairnsdale, another to the Tambo River and the Omeo track, the third to the Lakes' Entrance and the Snowy River. The tourist may select which he likes. That which leads to Bairnsdale conducts him up the Mitchell River, which discharges itself through the midst of a remarkable neck of land caused by the deposition of silt or detritus from the mountains. Year by year the neck pushes itself further and further into the lake, and the traveller finds himself apparently sailing on a canal constructed between two bays, into either of which he could easily cast a stone.

The Mitchell River is one of the most interesting of all those which fall into the lakes, because every rood of its banks, from Lake King to the town of Bairnsdale, bears evidence of human industry, while on the banks the native characteristics can be observed in full glory. Thus, while native arborescent shrubs with a wealth of blossom clothe and consolidate the immediate banks, the flats on either side are occupied by hop and maize plantations. To sail up the Mitchell River at certain seasons of the year is to revive memories of the Kentish hop-grounds, the avenues stretching into dim distances, while at others the brilliant green of the maize forms a background which is superb in its suggestiveness of riches. Bairnsdale is prettily situated on an eminence overlooking the river, whose fertile flats spread for miles, and are unsurpassed for fertility in any part of Australia. Sunset on the lakes has been alluded to as a sight by no means to be missed, but a summer sunset on the Mitchell River forms one of those glorious scenes which painters love to delineate.

There are some seven rivers falling into the lakes, and another which should by no means escape notice is the Tambo. It also discharges itself into Lake King, and is navigable for sixteen or seventeen miles, when rapids check further progress on the part of the steamers which regularly ascend it, no less for the purpose of conveying produce grown upon its prolific banks than to allow lovers of the picturesque to discover hitherto unknown delights. At its mouth the Tambo is a lovely wide stream, abounding in waterfowl of every description. The swan, the ibis, the lonely crane, make it their chosen abode, and shelter they have in plenty. Further up, the river contracts until it runs between almost precipitous cliffs of limestone, abounding with fossils such as are dear to the hearts of geologists. The immediate country is accounted especially rich, and magnificent crops of hops and maize reward the toil of the settlers, who have taken up what once was considered rather an unpromising country. Above Bruthen, which town is served by the navigation of the Tambo, the scenery, backed up by wild mountains, becomes exquisite, and there are reaches and quiet pools in the river which would repay hours of fatigue to reach. The Tambo is certainly the gem of Australian rivers.

The third route which has been spoken of is that which leads to the "Lakes' Entrance." As will have been inferred by the reader, a system of lakes fed by more than half-a-dozen snow-fed streams of magnitude, and lying in close juxtaposition to the sea, must have outlet; and so it is. But it unfortunately happens that the outlet —or, as the usual Australian habit of inversion will call it, the entrance—to the lakes is of a shifty character. To-day it may be here, to-morrow a mile and a half off; a day or two more, and the capricious entrance nears its old location. The fact is that the lakes discharge their mighty contents into the ocean at what is known as the Ninety-mile Beach, being that enormous bight which lies between Wilson's Promontory, the southernmost point of the continent, and Cape Howe, the easternmost point. "The long wash of Australasian seas" is here no poetical fiction.

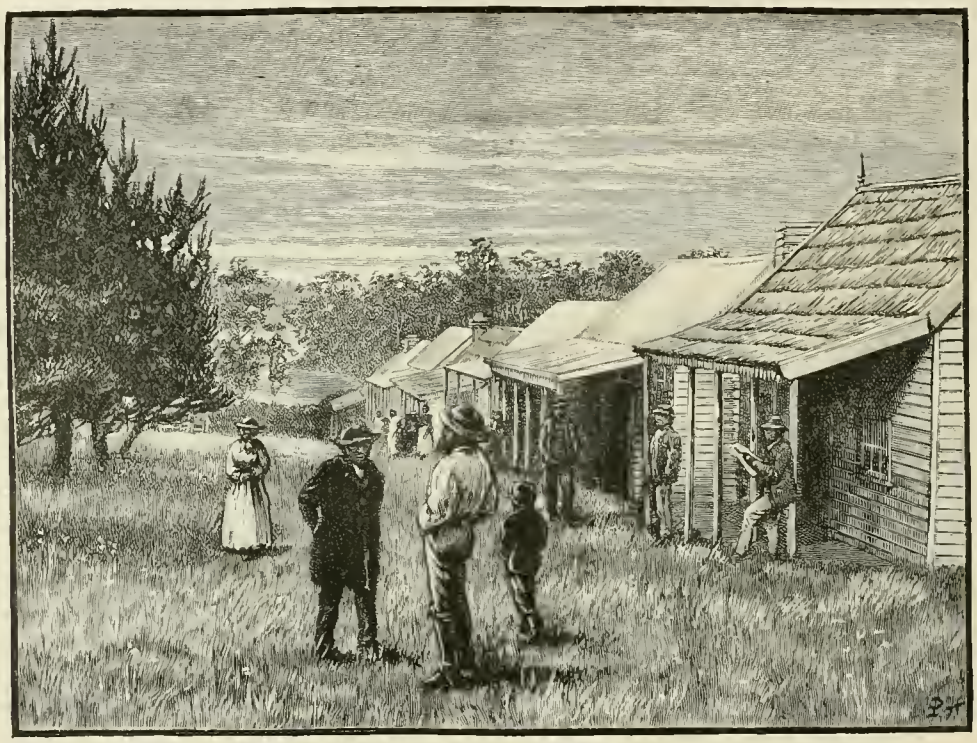
The cruel breakers lash and foam along this coast, and vain appear to be the attempts of man to stem them. It will be seen at a glance that, granted an outlet to the sea, the produce of Gippsland could be conveyed to the markets by the cheapest of all carriage, that of water, but occasionally days, weeks, and even months elapse before vessels can cross the bar formed by the meeting of the outflowing waters of the lakes and the inflowing ocean. To remedy this it has been determined to form an artificial entrance, and the advice of the most eminent engineers of England has been sought. Even at the works now in progress the lovers of the picturesque will not languish, though in the midst of utilitarian scheme, for the restless ocean, impatient of the puny hands which would fain control it, occasionally lashes itself into fury, and in a few hours sweeps away the result of the expenditure of thousands of pounds, treats enormous piles like so many matches, and with many a hoarse murmur billow tells to billow the tale of the work of destruction.

It is just where the works are in progress that the beauty of the lakes centres. Opposite lies the little township of Cuninghame, the resort in summer of tourists, whose number year by year gets greater as the country is explored and its manifold beauties are unfolded. Within easy reach are all the beauty-spots of the lakes. Metung, with the lovely Bancroft Bay, its glassy back-waters swarming with fish and fowl, lies to the west: Lake Tyers, of which more anon, to the east. Just opposite the Lakes' Entrance works is the bluff known as Kalimna (the "beautiful"), from which eminence an almost unequalled view is to be obtained. Lake after lake, arm after arm, can be descried to the right; to the left the great white horses of the Southern Ocean chase each other along the lengthening strand; in front, and at the back, lie gullies which put to shame the efforts of poet or painter to describe them. There is one immediately behind this coign of vantage, filled with miraculous ferns and mosses and sweet-scented star-blossomed creeping-plants. The voice of the bell-bird is never hushed within its recesses, and it might have been of such a sylvan retreat that Kendall, that true Australian poet, wrote:—

> "October, the maiden of bright golden tresses,
> Loiters for love in these cool wildernesses;
> Loiters knee-deep in the passes to listen.
> Where dripping rocks gleam and the leafy pools glisten.
>
> * * * * * *

"Welcome as waters unkissed by the summers
Are the voices of bell-birds to thirsty far-comers
When fiery December sets foot in the forest,
And the need of the wayfarer presses the sorest.
Pent in the ridges for ever and ever,
The bell-birds direct him to spring and to river
With ring and with ripple, like runnels whose torrents
Are toned by the pebbles and leaves in the currents."

Indeed, there is much life about these seeming solitudes. An ardent, though anonymous, lover of Nature writes, "The lakes have an additional charm, in that much

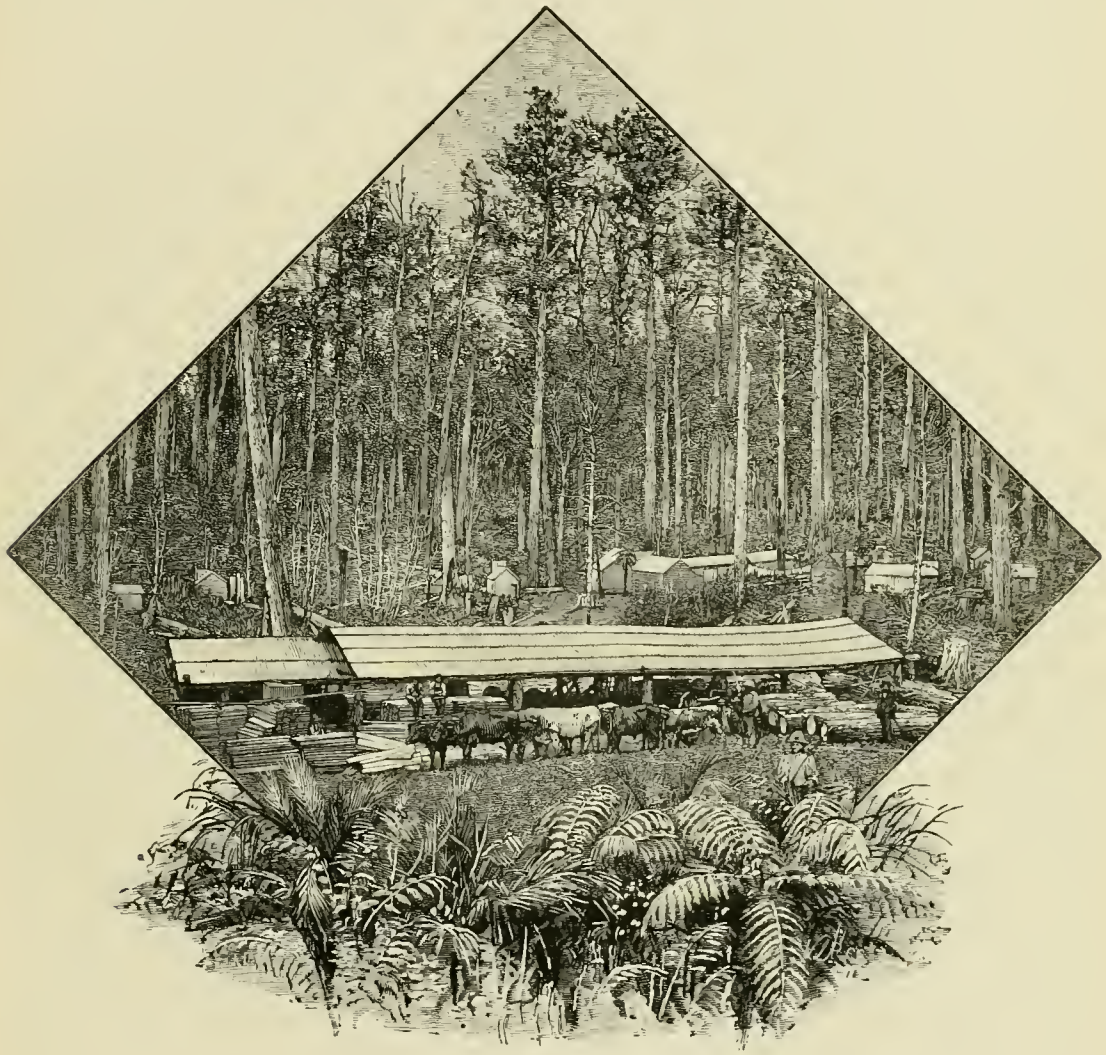


MISSION STATION, LAKE TYERS.

of the wild life yet remains. The heights above the entrance are a naturalist's paradise. From the denser thickets wonga-wonga and bronzewing pigeons—shy as a nightingale—flutter out and are gone in an instant."

"On moonlight nights one can lie in the shadow of the thickets and see the lyre-bird come out into the open glades and play about. As the black cockatoo passes overhead, the spots of flame in his broad tail light up a coat otherwise sable. The thrushes have a plumage as bright as the bronzewing, and with their white throats and fantails—a characteristic of tropical birds—they are altogether more gay than the modest sweet-voiced immigrants beneath the laurustinas in our gardens. Down in the grassy hollows one is startled with the sudden hum of beating wings, and a little king-

quail, not larger than a pipit, whirrs away into the distance. Amongst the most beautiful of Gippsland birds is the white crane, with its curved beak, serpent head, and snowy plumes flowing out airily from back, breast, and head. The bittern, with its wealth of brown breast-feathers, dreams in the starlight, and about the lake-timber the



SAW-MILLS.

sooty owl (in appearance an undoubted night-jar, but with talons almost as terrible as an eagle's) makes his home. When the rustle of his beating wings was heard in the darkness above the aboriginal camps, the natives whispered to each other that a bad spirit was abroad.

"The sea-birds are thick about the shore. Pacific gulls, dull-grey or black and white, wheel about in hundreds, and when a dead fish is cast up by the waves, these sea-scavengers, with their strange razor-bills, soon give it interment.

Such are some of the characteristics of the lake-scenery; but it is impossible to part from it without a glimpse at the "gem of Lake-land"—Lake Tyers. The lake in question is only separated from the sea by a thin line of hummocks, and when it is reached it fixes itself upon the traveller's mind. Lake Tyers in itself is in no way remarkable, save that upon its shores stands another of the aboriginal mission-stations, presided over by Mr. Bulmer—a very picturesque place, with neat buildings and quite a pretentious church. But it has two "arms," and he who misses exploring these, loses glimpses of the loveliest scenery to be found throughout the length and breadth of the land.

It is almost impossible to be too enthusiastic about the Nowa-Nowa Arm. Like Tennyson's brook, it "winds about and in and out," but it is fifteen miles in length, and of corresponding breadth. It has little bays and arms of its own; it has charming spots scattered along its banks, where are creeks falling into the main water; and dells and waterfalls and mossy glades abound all along its beauteous shores. The foliage which fringes this arm is exquisite, and the eye meets new beauties in every direction. It need be scarcely said that it is in this particular that most Australian scenery fails. It is the lovely foliage which lends to Windermere and other English lakes their chiefest charm; it is because in Gippsland tender greens as well as russet-browns and streaks of crimson enliven the landscape that its woodlands are never monotonous. Another arm of Lake Tyers is only inferior to the Nowa-Nowa.

There are many such "arms" to be found branching from off the lakes, and the North Arm, near the entrance, might be cited as an example but none equal the ones of which we have been speaking. The water sparkles, the fish leap, the whole scene is one of contentment and peace, far enough removed from the busy haunts of men to justify the hope that thus they may remain to be a joy to thousands yet unborn. Of themselves, the lakes, it may be said that their full glamour can never be experienced until one has sat out at night watching the long rollers of the Southern Ocean dash on the beach—as dash they do, and ever will, even on the calmest of soft summer nights. It is on just such a night that the exquisite beauty of water in motion is most apparent. The waves—they are scarcely breakers—now come rolling crisply in, laving the yellow sands as gently as a mother would caress a sleeping child.

In the broad daylight, no matter how gently the tide creeps in between the rocks (between the bays of the pier the workmen are yonder painfully struggling with sea-weed), one is irresistibly reminded of Kingsley's "cruel crawling foam;" but at night it is beautiful, and cruelty and treachery are forgotten. Below laps the wave; above shine the moon and the stars. On such a night, in the midst of such a scene, Brunton Stephens' exquisite lines will recur:—

"Out on the orb-studded night, and the crescent effulgence of Dian;
Out on the far-gleaming star-dust, that marks where the angels have trod;
Out on the gem-pointed Cross, and the glittering pomp of Orion—
Flaming in measureless azure, the coronal jewels of God.

* * * * * *

"Oh! summer night of the South! Oh! sweet languor of zephyrs love-sighing!
Oh! mighty circuit of shadowy solitude holy and still!
Music scarce audible, echoless harmony joyously dying—
Dying in faint suspirations o'er meadow, and forest, and hill!"

From Sale another journey may be undertaken, and the seeker after the picturesque in Gippsland should not neglect to take it. In the early days of the settlement Port Albert was the place whence supplies were drawn; and though the railway has changed that, a coach still runs daily between the two places, and settlement in Old South Gippsland is rapidly progressing. Between Rosedale and "The Port," and in the vicinity of the ranges called after Count Strezlecki, there exists a territory of which alleged fabulous accounts have been received concerning its great fertility, its wondrous vegetation, its apparently unconquerable difficulties.

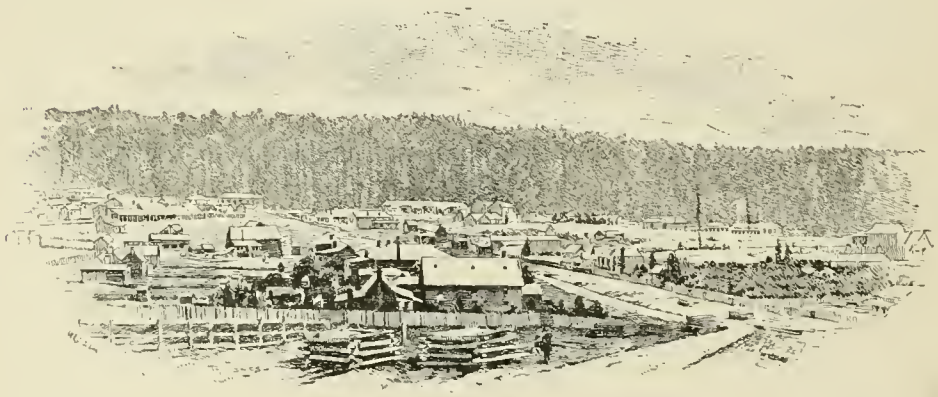
But the "fables" have been verified by the experience of the stout-hearted yeomen who have selected land in the almost unexplored areas of the county of Buln-Buln. This is the country of big trees. One was measured by a Government surveyor which was eighty-one feet in circumference at a height of seven feet from the ground. One burned to the ground was found to be, within the hollow recess of its stump, twenty-five feet in the clear. These mammoths of the forest—the *Eucalyptus amygdalina*—shoot up to a height of from two hundred to three hundred feet without a branch marring their splendid pillars. The undergrowth is of the muskwood, the hazel, and the sassafras, and is worthy of the stately neighbours whose feet it clothes. The soil which can support vegetation of this sort is of the richest, and it may go without saying that there is not a square yard of it which would not delight the soul of a botanist. Here, again, the wealth and beauty of the foliage are very marked. From these forest recesses the visitor emerges into beautiful glades, gorgeous with resplendent verdure.

One of the most picturesque portions of South Gippsland is to be found on the Agnes River, a tributary of the Franklin. Here are falls of a beauty rivalling those of the Californian valleys, which everyone knows in pictures. The Agnes Falls descend in an unbroken sheet for a hundred feet. The slender spray is tossed about like a bridal veil in the fair summer weather when floods are out; and at all seasons when the sun is shining the iridescent hues of the rainbow play about the rocky stream, which receives welcome supply from the higher lands. These unexplored localities will one day be as much sought after as places now world-famous; meanwhile they are known but to few surveyors and ardent bushmen.

There is just one other locality to which reference should be made. The embouchure of the noble Snowy River, which rises in New South Wales, is within this territory of Gippsland. The river is one of those streams whose every movement fascinates—now brawling between precipitous rocks, now flashing over pebbly reaches, and anon falling into silent pools. It may yet come to be known to fame as a salmon-river, for strenuous efforts have been made to acclimatise the monarch of river-fish in its snow-fed waters, and then another chapter in the book of picturesque Gippsland will be opened.

It would be unjust to close any account of this province without a word as to its inhabitants. They are generous and hospitable—traits which might be expected, considering the character of the early pioneers. Altogether Gippsland may lay fair claim to be considered the most interesting portion of Victoria. It occupies nearly a

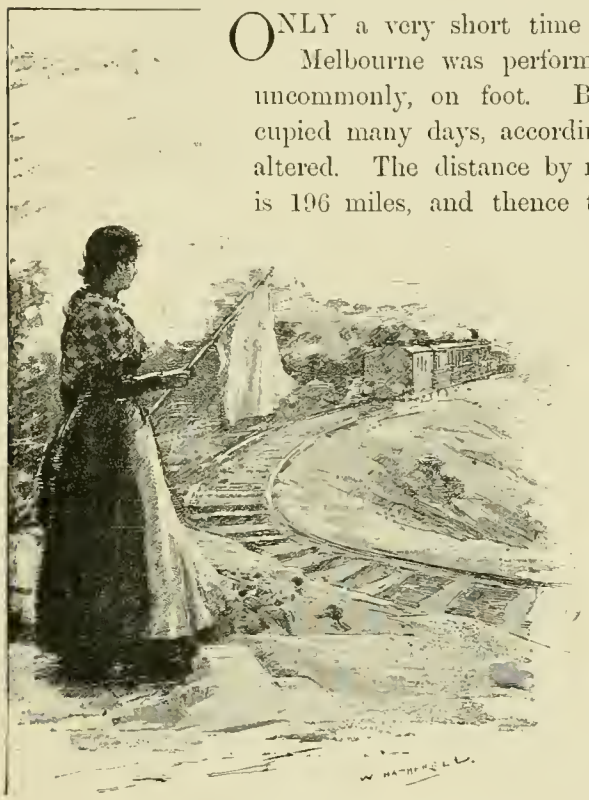
fifth of the colony, and is yet practically unexplored. It was but the other day that the existence of a mountain-lake was made known, which hereafter may figure amongst the most picturesque of all its features. Its mountains, its lakes, and its noble river-systems continue to justify the appellation which M'Millan bestowed upon it of *Caledonia Australis;* for, without the rigorous climate of Scotland, it contains in a singular degree many of Scotia's characteristics.



WARRAGUL.

THE ADELAIDE AND MELBOURNE RAILWAY.

From Adelaide—Excelsior—Mount Barker—Strathalbyn—Ninety Mile Desert—Mallee-Scrub—Wells—Border Town and Servicetown—Nhill—Kiata—Horsham—Stawell—Gold—Hall's Gap—Vineyards—Ararat—Melbourne.



AT A CROSSING.

ONLY a very short time ago the journey between Adelaide and Melbourne was performed in vehicles or on horseback, or, not uncommonly, on foot. By the most direct road the journey occupied many days, according to the rate of travel. But now all is altered. The distance by rail from Adelaide to the Victorian border is 196 miles, and thence to Melbourne 313¾, or nearly 510 miles in all. By the daily express a traveller can leave Adelaide at half-past two o'clock in the afternoon of one day and arrive in Melbourne at fifteen minutes to ten on the morning of the day following. And this is done on a railway said to be one of the best-constructed lines in the world, and one on which many engineering difficulties had to be overcome. It is built on the broad gauge, and throughout the journey the carriages run as smoothly as on a bowling-green. The train includes a boudoir-car, arranged into berths for sleeping; and travellers say that this is the most comfortable carriage and the smoothest in its motion that they have ever known.

On leaving the Adelaide station the train sweeps away southwards, and after passing through the suburban towns of Goodwood and Mitcham begins then to ascend the hills. Mitcham is prettily situated on a spur of the Mount Lofty Range, and is a favourite place of residence with men of business. But though it can boast of splendid views, its charms are quickly forgotten by the traveller as he is carried onward and upward. The panorama of valley, plain, and sea unfolded before him is not to be easily surpassed in any part of the world. The gradients are very steep, and many tunnels are passed through. In the neighbourhood of Blackwood Station (which is reached in eleven and a half miles) is an extensive brick manufactory, and about one mile distant are strawberry gardens, some of them several acres in extent. Fruit trees of all descriptions flourish exceedingly, and in a valley to the south of Blackwood stands a large jam factory,

At this station the line turns abruptly northward, forming a long loop, horse-shoe-shaped. It still ascends, and at Belair rises to a height of 1,008 feet. Besides the beauty of the scenery, this place is noted for a building surrounded by grounds, and known as the Inebriates' Retreat. It can accommodate fifty-two patients, and many men have felt thankful for the renewed health of mind and body gained within its walls. From Belair to Upper Sturt, Mount Lofty, and Aldgate stations the train passes along the sides of steep hills. Orchards clothe their slopes, and gardens smile from the rich soil of the shady valleys. The last-named station is the terminus of the suburban traffic. Six trains are daily despatched thither; and, though it is nearly twenty-two miles from the city, a number of citizens live there. There are many beautiful houses in the neighbourhood, for, being 1,092 feet above the sea, the heat of the summer months is little felt.

Mount Lofty, the station immediately preceding Aldgate, is at an altitude of 1,700 feet, the highest point on the line, where the descent commences. It will interest Londoners to hear that the chief hotel in Aldgate is called "The Pump." Aldgate itself is a queer transference of a name. It would be difficult to find any place less like a ward of London than this new "Old Gate."

After Bridgewater comes Balhannah, a pretty, quaint, sleepy hollow of a place on the Onkaparinga River; and the next station is Mount Barker Junction. The line that here branches off turns away to the right, and runs to Victor Harbour, a favourite summer resort. There are two places on this line that are worthy of mention, and to them we will turn for a few minutes.

Taking them in order, we come first to Mount Barker, where we find ourselves in one of the oldest districts in the province of South Australia. The pioneers settled here because the land was good, and also, probably, because the climate in winter reminded them in some degree of the old country they had left, falls of snow being by no means uncommon. The whole place has a touch of England about it. There are hedges of gorse and sweet-briar; the elm and the oak, the walnut and the chestnut, together with many other English trees, flourish, and hold sturdily to their habit of shedding their leaves in winter. The town (containing some seven hundred people) is a quiet, homely place, well drained, and pleasant to live in. Once it was a centre of active life, but now the tide has flowed northward, and the old place is somewhat stagnant.

Strathalbyn, the next town of any size on this line, is a little larger than Mount Barker. The country surrounding it is hilly on three sides, while on the fourth and southern side the land stretches away to Lake Alexandrina in a scrub-covered plain. The town is exceedingly pretty—quite as picturesque as Mount Barker, though in a different way. Before the line was opened, Strathalbyn experienced busier times than it now does, for the main road to Milang, Wellington, and overland to Victoria, passed through it. The River Angus runs through the town. In summer it exists merely as a chain of water-holes, but in winter it comes down in flood, and not unfrequently overflows its banks and does damage to farms and gardens. The population numbers about eight hundred, and consists for the most part of industrious and well-to-do people.

But now, returning to Mount Barker Junction, the traveller is whirled onwards to Nairne, a little country village of some four hundred souls, lying 1,245 feet above the sea, and environed by heavily-timbered hills.

At the Murray Bridge the train stays for twenty minutes for a hasty meal. The bridge itself (which was built in 1879) is worthy of notice, from the fact that it is the largest structure of its kind in Australasia, and some reference to it will be found on p. 163, Vol. II. The township is practically but three years old, and therefore has no buildings of importance, but, situated where rail joins river, it must grow.

From the bridge the line runs almost parallel to the river until it reaches a point known by the ridiculous name of Tailem Bend. Here the Murray turns south-westward in its course to Lake Alexandrina, and the railway keeps straight on across what is known as the Ninety Mile Desert. The very name "desert" calls up, in imagination, scenes where bleak, sandy, waterless wastes everywhere meet the eye, a place the abominable desolation of which is heightened by an occasional oasis of pasture-land and sparkling spring. But here we have no desert in the proper sense of the word. The soil is sandy, and is covered for mile after mile with mallee-scrub. This consists of a species of eucalyptus growing in dense clumps. The bole is a huge piece of rather flat, gnarled wood, not more than about twelve inches thick, and covering the ground with what is termed a "scab" of several square feet. From the lower side numerous small roots shoot down into the earth, and from the upper side rises a cluster of stems of the thickness of a reed. They reach a height of twelve or fourteen feet without a branch, and then carry a head of long dark-green leaves peculiar to the species. On many of these roots no fewer than fourteen stems may be counted. Where roads or railways have been cut through, the scrub stands up on either side like a wall, and as the height is very uniform, the effect is exceedingly monotonous. This, however, is not so noticeable nor so tiresome when travelling by rail as it was in the past, when the journey had to be done by coach or on horseback. In those days the traveller could see the road stretching on in front of him for mile after mile with no object of interest upon which to rest his eye; and yet this scrub, dreary and monotonous as it is, possesses a quality of sterling value. Its roots, long slender fibres, reach down to great depths and extract the moisture from the soil. They hold it in quantity to supply the tree, and if a traveller finds himself benighted and without water, these roots will afford him succour. All that is necessary is to dig them up, break them into lengths of about twelve inches each, and stand them on end in a quart-pot or other vessel. The water, clear and cold, will then drain from them, and by constantly repeating the process a drink can be obtained.

Besides these trees the native pine and the quandong (or native peach) are to be found in considerable numbers. The pine is ornamental, and its stem is well adapted for telegraph-poles. The peach is a much smaller tree, seldom growing to a height exceeding ten or twelve feet. It has graceful foliage, and bears fruit of which the chief feature is the stone—round, and covered with indentation of curious and intricate pattern. These, when set in silver and strung together, form very elegant

BRIDGEWATER.

necklaces and bracelets. The flesh surrounding the stone is tough, and acrid to the taste, very different to the luscious and delicate flavour generally associated with peaches. In the season some of the settlers gather peaches and make them into a preserve.

At one or two points along the line the ground has been cleared, and attempts have been made to cultivate the land. The mallee is not troublesome to destroy; in agricultural areas the plan adopted is to break it down by means of huge rollers drawn by bullocks or horses; it is then left until dry, and then burned. In many places mallee land is of good quality.

The Desert soil is a loamy sand, and although the general impression is that the climate is arid, the rainfall, as registered for a considerable space of time by one or two settlers in the district, amounts to no less than from eighteen to twenty-five inches in the year. A suggestion worthy of consideration has been made relative to cultivating the Desert, and that is, that nearly the whole of the land is suitable for flower-farming. It is believed that lavender, mint, sage, rosemary, thyme, marjoram, and other plants of like nature would grow well, and would produce great quantities of essential oils. There is no doubt that the vine and the olive would also do well.

For many years sheep-farmers have occupied portions of the Desert, but it is not country that can carry many sheep. Water has been found in wells of no great depth, but the supply has not been large. At the time when the inter-colonial railway was in course of construction the want of water for the engines was felt. The Government

of South Australia then, following the advice of Mr. Henry Y. L. Brown, F.G.S., Government Geologist of the Province, decided to test the country for artesian water. A bore was put down at Tintinarra, midway across the Desert, and at a depth of about 300 feet a splendid stream of fresh water was struck. It rose in the pipes to the surface, and still continues to flow. There is no doubt that many other artesian wells

THE NINETY MILE DESERT.

are to be obtained in the same district, and then irrigation would be a matter not very difficult to accomplish.

As the train approaches Border Town, the Desert is left behind, and a finer class of country entered upon. In place of sand there is rich black soil; the monotonous mallee, the pines, and the peach-trees give place to noble red-gums, boxwood, and peppermint-gum trees. The traveller heaves an involuntary sigh of relief, for both eye and brain rejoice at the change of scene. It is probably night as the traveller

passes through, but the Australian bush looks its best in clear moonlight. The peculiar charm of its weirdness is then most felt.

Border Town is 183 miles from Adelaide. It is situated in the centre of the Tatiara District, and is built on rising ground on one of the banks of the Tatiara creek. It was founded by the South Australian Government in 1851 as a depôt for the gold escort from the Victorian diggings, and from this fact it derives additional interest, and, as Australian towns go, is of almost venerable age. At the present time it can boast of being the place where the telegraphic messages between Melbourne and Adelaide are repeated. The climate and soil are favourable to the growth of vines, but at present wheat is the chief article produced. The area under cultivation equals close upon ten thousand acres, and in favourable seasons the yield is very heavy. Local Government is represented by a District Council, having control of the roads in an area of 102 square miles. Though the place is called Border Town, the traveller is not yet on the border of South Australia.

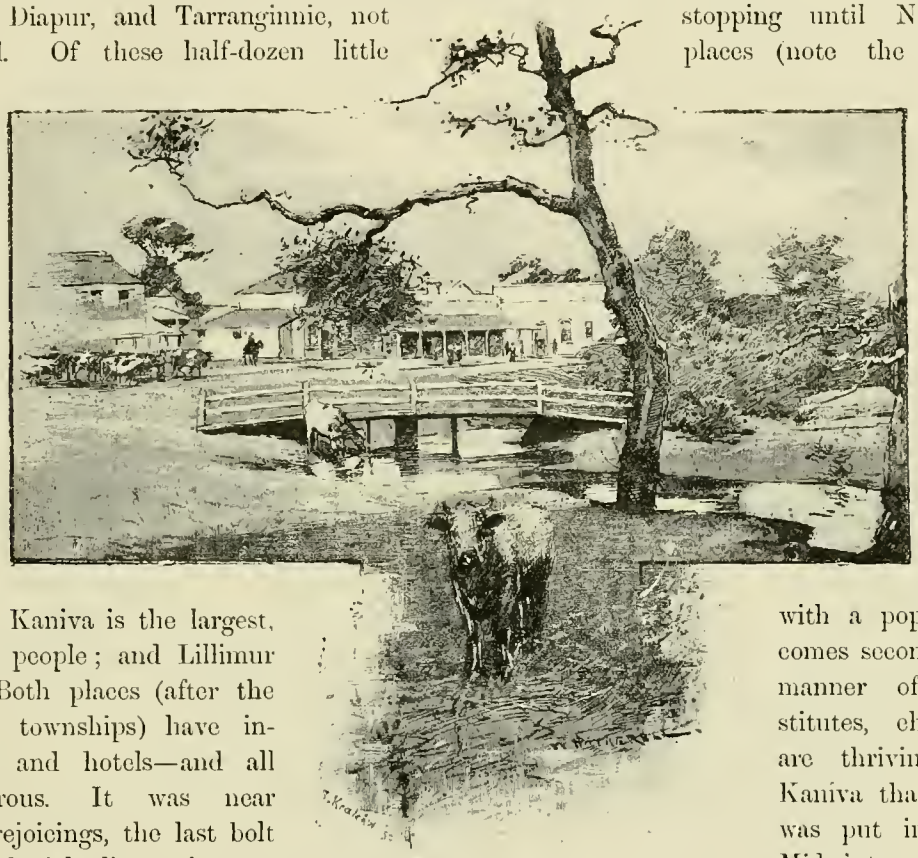
The next stopping-place on the line is Wolseley, named after England's "only general." Although small, the town is an important place, and in time will probably grow into a fair-sized city. It is the place where a branch line leaves the main trunk, and runs in a south-westerly direction to Naracoorte; and there it forks—in one direction to Mount Gambier and Beachport, and in the other to Kingston or Lacepede Bay.

Very shortly after leaving Wolseley, the train enters the Debatable Land—a strip of country lying between the two colonies, and to which both lay claim. How this dispute arose, or how it happened that this particular boundary-line was not properly set out from the very beginning, are questions which would require more space in which to answer them than can be here allowed. A great deal of correspondence concerning the matter has passed between the Governments of Victoria and South Australia, but no arrangement has as yet been made. Victoria thinks that as her sister has such an immense territory she can well afford to be generous and yield the land up with a good grace; while South Australia, on the other hand, says that she cannot afford to surrender an acre. The latest suggestion is that the matter be referred to the Privy Council for settlement; while the one thing that is quite clear is that a line of longitude is not a good boundary. The amount of land in dispute hardly appears to be worth the expense, for the term "strip" accurately describes it. It is 136 chains wide, and extends the whole length of the Victorian border, a distance of about 342 miles. It is of fair quality, and at the present time is occupied and governed by Victoria. It is leased for grazing purposes, and the rents range from 1d. to 3s. per acre per annum. The inter-colonial railway passes across it, and Servicetown, the first station met with on the Victorian side, is built upon it. This place is called after the Hon. James Service, for some years Prime Minister of Victoria; and it is appropriately named, seeing that he is a strong advocate of Australian federation, a cause which inter-colonial railways will surely advance.

At this place the fact that the traveller has entered another colony is marked by the appearance of Custom House officials and the examination of luggage for

dutiable goods. This is by no means a pleasant ordeal to have to go through at any time, still less when it occurs in the middle of a long railway journey, and at night. In this instance it can be obviated by booking luggage through to Melbourne, when the examination is not made until the terminus is reached.

From Servicetown the express train runs through Leeor, Lillimur, Kaniva, Miram Piram, Diapur, and Tarranginnic, not stopping until Nhill is reached. Of these half-dozen little places (note the native



BORDER TOWN.

names) Kaniva is the largest, with a population of 350 people; and Lillimur comes second, with 250. Both places (after the manner of Australian townships) have institutes, churches, banks, and hotels—and all are thriving and prosperous. It was near Kaniva that, amid great rejoicings, the last bolt was put into the inter-colonial line; it was Midwinter Day (June 24), in the year 1886. A poetical writer once spoke of a proposed railway across New Zealand as the "marriage-ring of an island." Following his example, a joker called the Adelaide and Melbourne Railway the marriage-lines of two cities.

At Nhill the train stops for a few minutes. Within the last few months this township has made rapid progress, and though the present population does not number much beyond one hundred, it will soon rapidly increase. In addition to being on the inter-colonial railway, it is on the main road to the South Australian border, and therefore receives double traffic. Its name is curious, and is said to have been given to the locality by the natives. An ancient blackfellow, on being questioned as to its meaning, replied that it was "country belonging to no one," "no good." This may have been due to the fact that there are no natural waters near Nhill, the present supply being artificial. To the natives country such as this would be practically useless, and

it is certain that they did not make much use of it, for there are no indications of encampments, ovens, or barked trees, such as are found in well-watered districts. On the other hand, there is a classical faction that maintains that Nhill is the Latin *nihil*, and that the name was the result of some early settler's disgust. In reliance on its future, the little place is more than adequately provided with public offices, banks, and places of worship.

Kiata, the next station to Nhill, is a place destined to be one of the principal grain-depôts on the railway between Dimboola and the South Australian border. It is the nearest station for country extending twenty miles north, and a large quantity of wheat may be expected to come in from the districts lying to the south and south-west. The express does not stop at Gerang-Gerang, but runs on to Dimboola, a town situated on the Wimmera River, 246 miles from Melbourne. The name (though it may sound like a native one) is not Australian, but Indian, and was given to the place by the local surveyor, who had at one time lived in the district of Dimboola in Ceylon. It is in the centre of the mallee country, and has lately risen to a town of some importance. There are many pretty views in the neighbourhood, and the river (even in the height of summer) presents a cool and pleasant appearance. The surrounding country is largely cultivated by a number of well-to-do farmers, many of whom hail from the Fatherland. Ten miles from the township stands the Antwerp Oil Manufactory, the property of Mr. J. Bosisto, M.L.A., the well-known chemist of Melbourne, where the leaves from the mallee (*Eucalyptus dumosa*) are distilled for the extraction of eucalyptus oil.

Without stopping, the train passes Wail (for who would stop at a place with such a name?) and Pimpinio (the penultimate "i," be it noted, is long). A blackfellow says the word means "set down for rest." Next comes Horsham, a municipal borough built on the Wimmera, a very typical Australian river. It begins well, and continues well, being a most respectable river at Horsham. It pushes north, as if to join the Murray, and if it had only fulfilled its promises it would have been the making of a district; but its strength is inadequate, it is unable to force its way through the sandy soil, and the Murray is never reached. Horsham is one of the chief towns on the inter-colonial railway, the population being estimated at about 2,500, and it is daily increasing. It is the principal town in the Wimmera district, and is the centre of extensive plains. The country is used chiefly for agricultural purposes, and a vast amount of land has been "selected." One of the principal buildings is the hospital, a large brick building divided into three wards, and standing on a reserve of nine acres, well planted with flowers, trees, and shrubs. Patients are received from all parts of the country within a radius of twenty-five miles. Another large building comprises the post-office, land-office, and sub-treasury. Horsham can also boast of a town-hall, Masonic hall, shire-hall, court-house, police-station, survey offices, two flour-mills, five branches of banks, five churches, two foundries, an institute containing nearly two thousand volumes, and a State school having an average attendance of nearly 300 scholars; hotels and stores and shops of every description abound.

The Botanical Gardens at Horsham are very extensive, no less than thirty-seven

acres being reserved for them. Of this area, however, only ten acres are cultivated. The fountain and the fern-house are notable objects, and well worthy of the town. A racing club has long been in existence, and the racecourse encloses within its boundaries ninety-five acres. The town is supplied with water raised by steam-pumps

STRATHALBYN.

MOUNT BARKER.

from the river, and is lighted by gas. An athletic club, four cricket and two football clubs, provide plenty of exercise for the young men, while a dramatic club and a brass band, together with the institute, help to cultivate the minds of young and old. An efficient fire-brigade, a total abstinence society, a Rechabite hall, and a branch of the Nations Association are also well established.

At the two next stations the express does not stop. The first one—Dooen—is five miles from Horsham. The headquarters of the Dooen-Kalker Waterworks are here. Running from the river in an open channel to the engine-house, the water is pumped

into a reservoir, and thence flows in open channels through the surrounding country. The Weir is one of the prettiest sights on the Wimmera, and is much frequented by pleasure parties.

Jung-Jung is six miles further on. The aborigines say "Jung" means breast, and Jung-Jung, two breasts. The next stopping-place is Murtoa. Here live a thousand people, governed locally by a Shire Council, edified by the pastors of seven places of worship, and educated by a State school, a private school, and a newspaper. The town is situated on Lake Marma. Time is not given in which to view the townships of Lubeck (suggestive of German settlers, who came to the district from South Australia, which is full of Germans), Glenorchy (suggestive of Scotch), and Deep-Lead (which is chiefly suggestive of mining), for the train does not pull up until Stawell is reached.

The town of Stawell takes its name from Sir William Foster Stawell, late Chief Justice of the Colony of Victoria, now Lieutenant-Governor, and for many years one of its leading citizens—a man of great public spirit and of intellectual power. It is a very important place, being situated in the centre of the Pleasant Creek goldfield. In addition to alluvial diggings, it has very rich quartz reefs, which have proved to be payable at great depths. The deepest progressive mine in the colony is here—namely, the Magdala—the workings having reached the depth of 2,500 feet. Another claim—the Pleasant Creek Cross Company—is said to be the richest in Victoria. It has been sunk to a depth of 1,282 feet, and has been bored by the aid of the diamond drill to a further depth of 306 feet. The amount of gold obtained from this claim equals 9½ tons, and dividends to the amount of £750,000 have been paid to the shareholders. The Oriental Claim has also yielded large returns. In June, 1878, 300 pounds (troy) of stone taken from the 1,160-feet level yielded no less than 343 ounces of gold. This was at the enormous rate of 2,561 ounces to the ton. The mines employ upwards of a thousand men when in full work. The machinery in use comprises thirty-three engines equal to 1,185 horse-power, 324 stamps for crushing quartz, and other appliances; the whole representing a value of about £130,000. The auriferous ground is estimated at twenty-seven square miles. In addition to the wealth derived from the mines, the country within a radius of forty miles supports a large agricultural population. The hospital is one of the finest in the colony. It stands on a reserve twenty acres in extent, but, although it has a good garden, it is not cultivated to the extent the committee desire, for to do this would cost more than the funds of the charity would warrant. The institute contains upwards of four thousand volumes. In addition to five banks, several insurance agencies, post and telegraph offices, and a court-house (which cost £8,000), there are two State schools.

The water supply comes from the upper part of Fyan's Creek, in Hall's Gap, a place in the Grampian Mountains. From a small weir made of logs the water is conveyed by flumes and inverted syphons a distance of seven miles. Thence it passes through a tunnel 3,300 feet in length and 700 feet below the crest of the range. After leaving the tunnel the water is conveyed for fifteen miles by twelve-inch cast-iron pipes to a reservoir in Stawell, and thence through the town in service-pipes. The cost of constructing the waterworks has been £110,000. To the south of

the town is a Botanical Park of fifty-nine acres, fenced, but not yet planted. There is also a park (Victoria Park) on the north-east side, of 211 acres, with several smaller reserves in various places. A racecourse of ninety-two acres in extent has also been formed, and possesses a grand stand and saddling-paddock.

Hall's Gap, twelve miles from Stawell, is noted for its beautiful scenery. The gap runs north and south through the Grampians for a long distance, and is rendered picturesque by rocks, over which many waterfalls dash, and by the heavily-timbered sides of the hills. Rose's Gap is about ten miles through, and this also is very pretty. On the south side the rocks rise almost perpendicularly in tier above tier, while on the north side they appear to be jumbled together in the utmost confusion.

To the south of Stawell is Great Western; this neighbourhood was first thickly populated in 1856, principally by miners, and some alluvial diggings are still being worked there. The soil and climate are well adapted to the growth of vines. The place is best known for its wine. The first vineyard was established in 1863, and the second in 1867. These, and one or two other vineyards, occupy 470 acres, and have yielded in the season 36,000 gallons of wine and about 180 gallons of brandy.

Ararat does not sound an Australian name, but there is a hill hard by, which suggested Mount Ararat in Armenia to that veteran explorer Major Mitchell, who is responsible for many names in this region. In "Oceana" Mr. Froude wonders who named Mount Macedon. It was Major Mitchell. The town of Ararat lies near the upper valley of the River Hopkins, and has 2,740 inhabitants. Here are many famous quartz and alluvial gold-mines, and the surrounding country is largely cultivated by farmers. . Included in the number of the population are 2,044 miners, of whom 400 are Chinese frugally working over again what the white man has left. This town is the envy of its neighbours for its public institutions. It possesses a lunatic asylum, hospital, gaol, institute, and, of course, State school. It is supplied with water from two reservoirs, with a capacity of 45,000,000 and 15,200,000 gallons respectively; the formation of these cost £65,000.

The next place of note is Beaufort, with a population of 1,000. This is also a mining district (both alluvial and quartz), at one time known as the Fiery Creek Diggings, and lies 1,272 feet above the level of the sea. The country is hilly and heavily timbered, and is devoted to sheep and agricultural farming. Mount Cob, in the neighbourhood, is celebrated for the beauty of its waterfalls and the picturesque features of its caves.

Burrumbeet, the next station but one, is situated on the lake of that name—an aboriginal word meaning "muddy water" (from *burrum*, muddy; and *beet*, water). It is a small township of about 100 people. In the district are numerous flat volcanic cones of fertile soil, and the land is used for grazing and sheep-farming.

Scarsdale Junction, where the line from Scarsdale joins the trunk four miles from Ballarat, is also a mining district, and then comes Ballarat. But this town has a history of its own, and is well worthy of a separate article; and there are also other sections which tell the traveller of the country through which the line passes between Ballarat and Geelong, between Geelong and Melbourne.

LATER EXPLORERS BY LAND.

A Mythical River—Kennedy—Yorke Peninsula—Jungle—Disasters—John McDouall Stuart—The Centre of Australia—Burke and Wills—Early Trouble—At Coopers's Creek—Across the Continent—Sufferings—To the Bitter End—The Relief Expeditions—Triumph of McKinlay's Party—Walker's Police Party—Later Successes.

WHILE Sturt was making his escape from the central desert, as described in an earlier article,* his old rival, Major (now Sir Thomas) Mitchell was exploring in the north of New South Wales and the south of Queensland. Here he came upon a large river flowing through beautiful grassy country, and this in an access of loyalty he called the Victoria, oblivious, as all explorers seem to be, that there was already on the west coast a river of that name. Mitchell was immensely pleased with his discovery, and described the river as second to none in the colony. On his return, his glowing descriptions of the Victoria and the plains and downs of Central Australia so excited the curiosity of the colonists that in the following year (1847) Kennedy, who had been his second in command, was sent out to trace this stream to the Gulf of Carpentaria, where Mitchell felt certain it had its outlet. Accordingly he set out, but soon discovered that instead of a northerly the river had a westerly course, and he strongly suspected it might be the Cooper's Creek of Sturt. At first travelling was pleasant enough, but soon the creek, as was its nature, spread itself out in reaches and water-holes, which grew scantier and scantier as he advanced, till at last the water dried up altogether, and both men and horses suffered severely from the want of it. The grass, too, was all gone, the horses were literally starving, and the men found themselves camped in a desert utterly destitute of vegetation, while before them stretched an endless array of the red sand-hills so often described by Sturt. This was about 100 miles from Sturt's farthest point on Cooper's Creek, and Kennedy turned back, convinced that this was the same river. This was the last that was heard for a long time of Mitchell's much-vaunted Victoria River, but Kennedy was not forgotten.

Men's minds were at this time much set on the discovery of an overland route to India, and since Leichhardt's track to the north-west was too roundabout, it was resolved, in 1848, to send an expedition under Kennedy to thoroughly explore Yorke Peninsula, where it was hoped he would not only find the desired route, but that the land would bear favourable comparison with the rest of the east coast. This expedition proved to be, for the small amount of country traversed, one of the most disastrous journeys ever undertaken, and the brief account that has come down to us is one record of suffering and death. A ship landed them—a party of thirteen men, one of whom was a blackfellow named Jackey Jackey—at Rockingham Bay, and they were to proceed north to Port Albany, where she was to meet them again. They seem to have been rather scantily supplied with flour, tea, and sugar, but the rest of their equipment was ample, and they had with them twenty-eight horses, two carts, and 100 sheep. Their

* *Vide* p. 195.

troubles commenced from the very beginning, for they were landed amidst impassable swamps, from which they only extricated themselves by going in a southerly direction. Not till June, fully a month after they had landed, was Kennedy able to turn west, and now he found his way barred by dense impenetrable jungle, bound together by thorny creepers which climbed even over the tallest trees, and opposed to the explorers one dense wall of greenery, through which it cost them an incredible amount of labour to cut their way. Added to this, they were in the tropics, the forest was hot and damp, and the men were soon prostrate with fever and ague. The blacks, at first peaceable, now became troublesome, and had to be driven off with the guns. The forest and jungle became denser and denser as they advanced among ranges in some places 2,000 feet high; and here, too, the roughness of the ground, the steepness of the precipices, the deep gullies, and the dense growth of seemingly impenetrable scrub, made their difficulties truly appalling. First one cart was abandoned, then the other, and, as a consequence, all the heavy baggage. There was abundance of water, but no grass, and the sheep were lost and died off rapidly. The horses, too, failed, and one by one were being left behind, while those that remained were so weak they could scarcely carry the pack-saddles and the small modicum of provisions that were left.

IMPENETRABLE JUNGLE.

It soon became evident that the party must push on to Port Albany if they would save their lives. Once they shot a wallaby, and once they caught some fish, but this was all they were able to add to their rapidly-diminishing stock of provisions, which is the more remarkable as the blacks were numerous, and where they could live there should have been sustenance for well-armed men, as these were. Worse still, these blacks were hostile, and would follow them for miles, throw spears into their camp, and, where it was dry enough, fire the grass or scrub. Weaker and weaker the men grew, the rations were reduced again and again, and at last it became evident that all could not reach Port Albany without help, and that their only chance of life was to

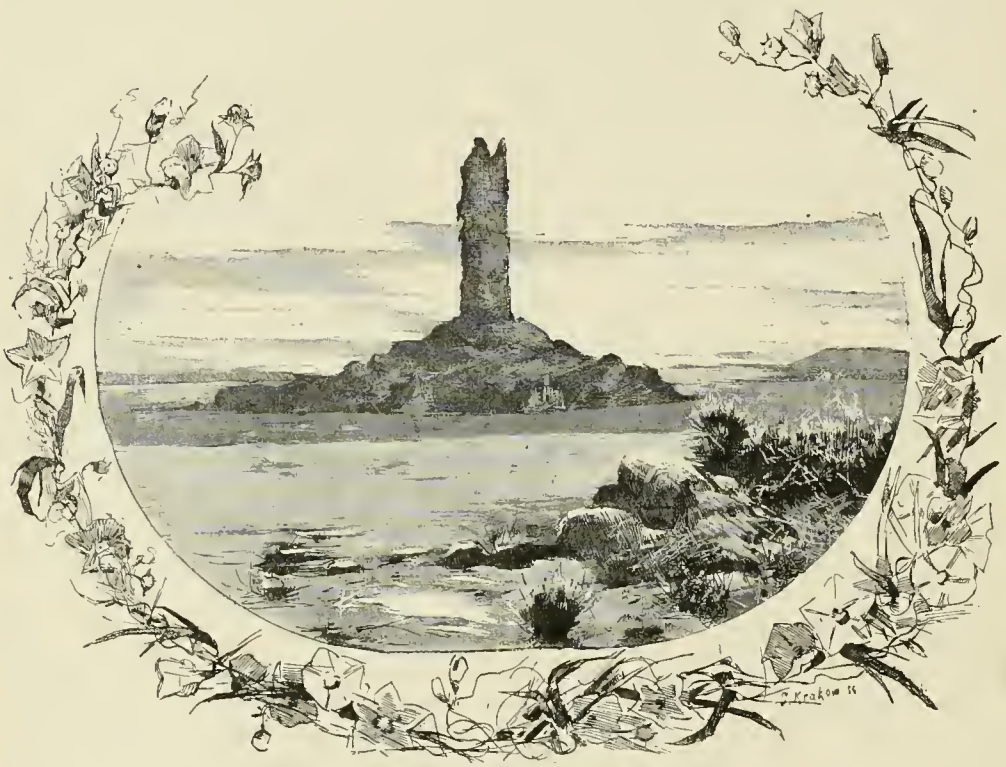
send on an advance party to bring help to those left behind. Accordingly Kennedy formed a depôt as near Weymouth Bay as possible, and taking with him three men and the blackfellow Jackey Jackey, set out for Cape Yorke. There were only nine horses now left, and of these he took seven, leaving the other two, with 28 lbs. of flour, as provisions for the eight men for six weeks. Heaven only knows how they were to exist on so little, and yet their lives depended on it. The rest of the story rests on the very imperfect narrative of Jackey Jackey, the only survivor of the five who left Weymouth Bay.

Their flour gave out, he said, after three days, and then they lived only on horse-flesh. By-and-by one of the men shot himself so badly that it was impossible he could go on, and Kennedy was obliged to leave him, with the two others to look after him, at a place called Pudding Pan Hill, near Shelborne Bay. All the provisions he had to leave with them was some horse-meat. Then he and Jackey Jackey went forward alone. Always the blacks followed them, but at last they arrived at a place where from a hill-top they could see Port Albany, and poor Kennedy must have rejoiced that at least one day's journey would end his labours. They were on the Escape River now, and he was inclined to believe the blacks friendly; but his own blackfellow knew better, and warned the explorer that they were treacherous and untrustworthy. For three days they had followed them closely, dogging their footsteps; at last, spite of every precaution Jackey could take, surrounding them in the scrub. Then they threw their spears, wounding Kennedy in the back and side, and Jackey over the eyes, while the horses were so maddened with spear-wounds that they rushed away into the scrub. The blacks then, according to Jackey, appeared to have retired, apparently satisfied with their work, and he carried his master further into the scrub, frequently asking, "Are you well now?" Poor Kennedy, who felt he was dying, answered, "No; I don't care for the spear-wound in my leg, Jackey, but for the other two in my side and back." Jackey then told him, not unkindly, perhaps, "Blackfellow always die when he got spear-wound in there," and asked pathetically, "Mr. Kennedy, are you going to leave me?" "Yes, my boy," answered poor dying Kennedy, dying so close to his journey's end, so close to help, and yet so far from all who loved him, tended only by this poor black boy; "yes, my boy, I'm going to leave you. I'm very bad, Jackey. You take the books, Jackey, to the Captain, but not the big ones: the Governor will give anything for them." Then he added, "Jackey, give me the paper, and I will write." One more struggle, the pencil dropped from his nerveless fingers, and he fell back and died in his faithful follower's arms. "Then," said Jackey, telling the story, "I turned round and cried. I was crying a good while until I got well. That was about an hour, and then I buried him. I digged up the ground with a tomahawk, and covered him over with grass, thin logs, and my shirt and trousers. That night I left him, near dark." The blacks followed him and threw spears at him, but by hiding in the scrub and then walking along for half-a-mile in a creek with only his head above water, he managed to throw them off the scent, and at last, after two days of suffering, Jackey found himself at Cape Yorke, "cooeying" loudly to the ship, which was close at hand, fearing still the blacks, who he thought were near in the scrub, and "murry murry" glad when the boat took him off.

This was on the 23rd December, 1848, and after hearing Jackey's story Captain Dobson at once sailed for Shelborne Bay, and, landing, endeavoured under his guidance to find the three men who had been left at Pudding Pan Hill. He does not, however, appear to have reached the spot where the party divided—certainly they never found the three men, but after a brief search hastened on to Weymouth Bay. A little over two miles from the shore they came upon the camp, tenanted, alas! by only two men, so wasted by famine and disease that it was only with the greatest difficulty they were taken to the schooner. The blacks, of whom there were plenty, appeared very hostile, and the men told a pitiful tale of suffering and endurance. On the 13th November Kennedy had left them, and it was not till the end of December that they were rescued. Generally the blacks who surrounded the camp were hostile and threatening, throwing spears among them, and they only kept them off with their guns. Sometimes, however, the natives were friendly, and gave them fish, but always these lonely men went in fear of their lives. One by one they died of starvation and exhaustion, and always the blacks grew bolder and bolder. At last the two who were left had given up all hope, and were just preparing for death (one, the naturalist, too weak to stand, could only sit with his gun across his knees, while the other, with his gun presented, endeavoured to keep the savages off) when the sailors, guided by Jackey, came rushing up and rescued them, the sole survivors of this ill-fated expedition. As soon as this sad news reached Sydney, a brig was sent to search Shelborne Bay, and to bring away from Escape River all records of poor Kennedy. His papers and journals were discovered, all but illegible, but of the three men left behind at Pudding Pan Hill not a trace was ever found.

In 1855-56 A. C. Gregory and his brother conducted a most successful exploring party from the Victoria River, in Western Australia, along Leichhardt's old route to Moreton Bay, without the loss of a single man. In South Australia, from 1851 to 1858, various small parties had been exploring the country round Lake Torrens, and had discovered that that lake, instead of being a huge horseshoe stretching round from the head of Spencer's Gulf, was, in reality, a number of lakes, or rather basins, sometimes containing mud crusted with salt, sometimes water blue as indigo and salt as the sea, sometimes even water quite fresh, varying according to the rains which fall, not only in Cooper's Creek and the country round, but very probably on the mountains far away to the east, where that river and its tributaries take their rise. These discoveries are worth mentioning, because they gave a direct route to the centre, and it was along this way that future explorers advanced. During the years 1858-59 John McDouall Stuart, who had been draftsman in Sturt's expedition, made several small exploring expeditions in South Australia, thoroughly examining the country to the west, south, and north of these basins, and showing clearly how much can be done at small expense by a man who thoroughly understands his work, for Stuart, who was an excellent bushman, seldom travelled with more than one companion. Sometimes they ran out of provisions entirely, and depended for food on their guns, when, as may easily be imagined, anything that came within range was considered game. Stuart discovered many patches of rock-strewn ground much resembling the stony desert that had so disheartened Sturt, but between them he found

good grass-lands, and this fact encouraged him to hope that Central Australia might not be the inaccessible desert it was now the fashion to consider it. The great idea now was to cross the continent from south to north; and this, spite of his terrible experiences with Sturt, was the object Stuart kept steadily in view. His recent journeys had opened the way to the centre considerably, and he now knew the route as far as the western shores of Lake Eyre—that is, to a latitude a little further north than that on which lies Depôt Creek, the spot where Sturt spent six weary months.

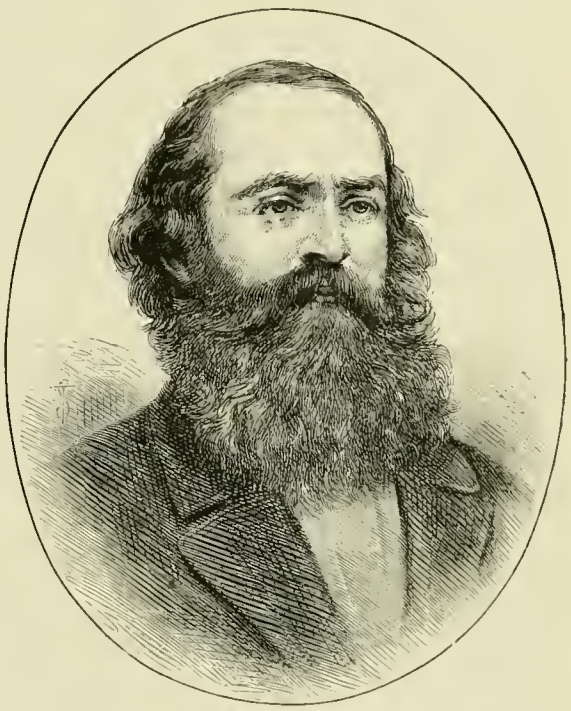


CHAMBERS' PILLAR.

Therefore in March, 1860, Stuart left Lake Eyre, and with only two men and thirteen horses, set his face steadily to the north.

To follow Stuart's journey day by day would be terribly monotonous. It was always a range, a barren plain, mulga-scrub, a dry creek, a water-hole. On April 14th he came upon a strange hill, capped with a monolith of sandstone, one hundred and fifty feet high, twenty wide, and ten deep, and this he called Chambers' Pillar. At last, one day in April, on taking his observations, he discovered that he was at the centre of Australia, and that his fondest hopes were realised. Well might he be proud. Leichhardt, Sturt, Eyre, and Gregory, with well-organised expeditions, had all suffered and striven, and striven in vain, to accomplish that which he had done with only two men and the most meagre of supplies. He stood in the very centre of Australia, and, behold, it was neither an inland sea nor yet a desert,

for, though there was little water, the country round was fairly well grassed and free from stones, spite of the soil being the inevitable red sand. Two and a half miles from the centre was a hill about two thousand feet high. This Stuart climbed, and, having built a cairn on top, planted there the Union Jack, and called it Central Mount Stuart. He also buried there a bottle containing an account of his discovery—a most necessary precaution, for who could tell whether these three men, half-famished and ill as they were, surrounded by hostile savages, with hundreds of miles of waterless desert between them and civilisation, would ever live to tell the tale of their success? Still Stuart was desirous of pushing on, and kept making short journeys from Mount Stuart in search of water. The country, however, seemed parched in every direction. The horses were exhausted, and Stuart was ill, partly with scurvy and partly from a fall from his horse. His condition must have been nearly desperate. His limbs were turning black with scurvy. Still he will not give in, but pushes on till he is within three hundred miles of the sources of the Victoria River. And now another obstacle presented itself. Signs of blacks had been pretty numerous as they advanced, and though this prognosticated better country, it was impossible to tell how long they would continue friendly. One evening towards the end of June, however, as they were camped on the banks of a creek, the blacks made a sudden and determined attack on the three men, assailing them on all sides with their boomerangs. Though no one was hurt, and they easily drove them off, this decided matters. Stuart felt at length that, if he would ever return at all, it must be at once, and, sorely as it went against the grain, he turned and retraced his footsteps, and, after much suffering, reached the settlements in the beginning of September. So ended the most marvellous exploration ever made in Australia, for, with three months' rations, three men, alone and unaided, had crossed two-thirds of the continent and solved the mystery which for so long had hung over the centre of Australia.



JOHN McDOUALL STUART.

Stuart's discoveries were considered of such importance by the Adelaide Government that the 1st of January, 1861, saw him again on the road, this time at the head of a well-equipped expedition consisting of twelve men, all of whom hoped to cross the continent before the great Victorian expedition which had started the year before. Though they pushed a good deal further north, reaching the seventeenth parallel of

latitude, want of water and failing provisions at length compelled Stuart, sorely against his will, to turn back.

In 1858 the colony of Victoria, awaking from her apathy, set on foot a scheme for thoroughly exploring the continent from sea to sea, and finding a route from Port Phillip to the Gulf of Carpentaria; and thus was started one of the most successful, the most magnificent, and, alas! the most disastrous exploring expeditions on record. Long before Stuart's second journey, before even he set out on his first, a committee had been appointed and over £12,000 raised, partly by a Government grant and partly by private gifts, and in the winter of 1860, before he had returned, the expedition was ready to start. With so much money there was no need to stint, and no expense was spared. Twenty-four camels had with their drivers been brought down from India, introducing a new element into Australian discovery, and the man who brought them over, a Mr. Landells, was named second in command. William John Wills—a young man of great attainments, who has, not untruly, been called the hero of the expedition—was meteorological and astronomical observer and third in command; they had twelve months' provisions, and in all things the committee seemed to have acquitted themselves well, except, alas! in the appointment of a leader, and on this, unfortunately, the fate of the expedition and the safety of its members depended. Their choice fell on Robert O'Hara Burke, a superintendent in the Victorian police, and about the very worst man for the post they could have chosen. He was a hot-blooded, impetuous Irishman, good-natured, kind, brave to rashness, utterly deficient in foresight. He had had no previous experience in exploring parties, and was no bushman, nor, indeed, did he possess the qualities necessary to make a good one; and though well liked—nay, dearly loved—by many, he seems to have been incapable of inspiring confidence in the party he had undertaken to lead, while his hot temper led him into continual squabbles with the men he was unable to rule. On the 20th August, 1860, the expedition left Melbourne, and all the town turned out to see the largest and best-equipped exploring party that had ever left a colonial capital fairly on its way. At the head of the imposing array of men, horses, camels, and baggage, rode Burke, on his pretty little grey mare; the mayor, in the name of the colony, wished them God-speed, and the crowds of spectators gave them three ringing cheers as they moved off on their eventful journey.

Troubles began before they had left the settled districts, and Burke's unfitness for his post soon became evident. At Baraanald, on the Murrumbidgee, he had quarrelled with his foreman and dismissed him for insubordination, and by the time they reached Menindie, a small township on the Darling, he and his second were at open war. With whom the fault lay it is difficult to say, but Landells resigned, thus depriving the camels and their drivers of the only man who really knew anything of their management. Burke promoted Wills to the vacant place, and as third officer he appointed a man named Wright, of whom he knew absolutely nothing.

To Cooper's Creek Burke determined to proceed as quickly as he could. Some of the camels, however, were unfit to travel, and impatient Burke, tired of the delay, unwisely divided his party, and with Wills, six men, five horses, and fifteen camels

pushed on, leaving instructions with Wright to follow him up as soon as possible with the remainder of the stores. Burke's journey was easy. Instead of following the roundabout course of Sturt, he struck straight across country, finding both food and water plentiful; the latter, he says in his first despatch, he was never without for more than twenty miles. Things certainly promised well for the explorers. On the 19th of October they left Menindie, and on the 11th of November they were on Cooper's Creek, where, though flies, mosquitoes, and rats made it anything but a pleasant summer residence, there was ample food and water for the cattle, which was the first consideration. Then came a time of waiting, which chafed Burke's impetuous nature beyond bounds. Day by day it grew hotter and hotter, day by day his provisions lessened, and he feared the northern route would be closed to him, as it had been to Sturt, by want of water, and yet Wright came not. Day after day, day after day, he looked for him, and yet there was never a sign. Burke's impatience could brook no longer delay, and he determined to start without him. The provisions he had with him would hardly suffice for this, so two horses were killed and their flesh dried for food, and on the 16th December he made his final arrangements and set out towards the north, leaving four men in the depôt, under the care of one of their number named Brahé, a working man. Burke told them that, should he not return in a few months' time, they might go back to the Darling, and he himself only took provisions for three months. Of their progress after they left Cooper's Creek, we have the diary of Wills and the meagre account of King, the survivor. Burke himself seldom wrote, merely contenting himself with hearing Wills read his journal, and adding an occasional note. The little party was now four in number—Burke, Wills, and two men (King and Grey), having with them one horse and six camels. At first they rode, but their rapid marches soon wearied the beasts, and after they had proceeded a very short distance they all travelled on foot, Burke and Wills in front, each carrying a revolver and a rifle. Their provisions were one pound of flour and one pound of meat daily, and a little rice occasionally, and at night they camped out without tents—hardly, perhaps, a matter of much consequence while they were in dry Central Australia, but once they were in the tropics, where the rainy season was commencing, dangerous in the extreme. Had the whole expedition been as ready as it should have been, they could have crossed the continent with perfect ease and safety, for along the whole of their route they were never once stopped for want of water.

All along the route Burke found not only plenty of water and grass for the camels, but plenty of game also. Blacks, too, were numerous, always the sign of a good season, but not until they were far north did they show any signs of hostility. Sturt's Stony Desert, which had so dismayed and crushed him, they found hardly an obstacle, and Wills declared he had seen far worse country on many a sheep-run, so wonderfully does land in Australia vary with the rainfall. Once they were in the tropics, the country improved rapidly, but there troubles began. One of the camels got bogged in a creek, and they were compelled to abandon him. The men were becoming very weary, too, with these rapid marches, and there is a considerable blank in Wills's journal. Rain was falling heavily, the camels could hardly drag themselves along, and

presently Burke again divided the party, leaving Grey and King in camp with the animals, while he and Wills endeavoured to reach the gulf on foot. At last they arrived at a great salt-marsh or mangrove-swamp at the mouth of the Flinders River, though they considered it the Albert, and found themselves within the limit of the tide. To reach the sea through the thick belt of mangrove was, in their enfeebled and famished

ROBERT O'HARA BURKE.
(*From a Photograph by Hill of Melbourne.*)

condition, an utter impossibility; they could not even see the ocean. Still they had done, they thought, all their fellow-colonists could expect; they had crossed the continent from sea to sea; and they stood there, those successful explorers, one day in February, 1861 (the exact date is uncertain), two ragged, famished men, whose only help for thousands of miles was two other men, as famished and worn as themselves, camped more than a day's journey off in the tropical bush. It was, nevertheless, a moment of great triumph for Burke and Wills when they set out on their

return journey, but the triumph lasted but a moment, for famine stared them in the face, and their journey back must needs be a race for life—a race which it seemed doubtful if men and animals, exhausted as they already were, could possibly win.

Having picked up Grey and King, they hurried along, taking no observations, having only the vaguest notions of where they were, their sole idea to get south and reach

WILLIAM JOHN WILLS.
From a Photograph by Hill of Melbourne.)

the depôt before their provisions were entirely gone. The result of their haste soon became evident. The camels were weak and emaciated, and first one was abandoned, then one killed for food, then another abandoned. All were reduced and ailing, poor Grey very ill indeed. One day towards the end of March, Burke found him behind a tree, eating a mess of flour and water which he had made for himself. He pleaded—for he had no right to take the flour—that he was very ill with dysentery, and that he could not live on the twelve sticks of dried camel-flesh and the quarter of a pound

of damper which was now their daily ration, and therefore he had taken a little flour —only a very little. Burke paid no heed to his pitiful appeal, but gave him a severe thrashing, and even the gentle Wills had no pity, and thought he was shamming. From the effects of that thrashing poor Grey never recovered. Soon they were all suffering, and before a week had passed Grey was so ill that he was strapped to the back of a camel, almost as emaciated as himself. On the 13th April they came to the Stony Desert, and for the first time on their journey were two days without reaching a creek. This was Grey's last effort. He struggled on seven miles further, and then they camped at a polygonum swamp and endeavoured to relieve his sufferings. But it was too late; he was so far gone he could scarcely speak, and next morning he died. They buried him there in the desert, and then camped for a day to recruit, for they were very weary. That small delay cost two of them their lives.

At Grey's grave they abandoned everything, save the two camels, a little meat, and their firearms; and then, Burke riding one camel, Wills and King the other (Billy the horse had long ago been killed for food), they pushed on as fast as possible, for the spectacle of Grey's slow death seems to have shown them more clearly what might be their own fate, should they delay much longer; so they urged the weary beasts on, with great exertion crossed the dreary succession of sand-hills, and at last reached the depôt, or rather the place where the depôt should have been, for in a few moments the awful truth burst on them—the depôt had been deserted, and further search revealed that it had been deserted only that very morning. Burke behaved like a madman; he shouted, he cooeyed, but only the echo of his own voice came back to him; and when at last the bitter truth forced itself on him he sat down with his head in his hands, utterly crushed and heart-broken. Wills and King, searching, found a *cache* with ample provisions and a letter from Brahé, stating that he and his men had left that morning, all being in good health. Why Brahé should have told such a gratuitous lie has never been clearly demonstrated, for he and his men were ill with scurvy, one so bad that he died before they reached the Darling, and that, of course, was his reason for leaving the depôt. Even now all would have been well if the doomed men had but followed up Brahé's track, as Wills and King wished—for that night he and his party camped only fourteen miles away. But Burke was obstinate, and for some reason known only to himself decided to follow down Cooper's Creek and try to reach Mount Hopeless, where there was a cattle station, though he could not have been ignorant of the fact that as late as 1858 A. C. Gregory had traced down the creek and found it a dry channel crossing a barren waterless desert, into which it was madness for men in their condition to venture. Common sense was with Wills and King, and pointed to the Darling as the proper route to be followed. Every inch of the way was known to them, the distance was but a fifth of that they had just travelled from Carpentaria, they had nearly double the amount of provisions, and only three people instead of four to feed; but that night, when they discussed the matter over an ample evening meal, Burke declared he should make for Mount Hopeless, and the others bowed to

his decision as leader. They were terribly weary and worn, and their own condition made Wills, who was a humane and kindly man, think pitifully of Grey's sufferings. "Poor Grey," he writes sorrowfully, "must have suffered very much many times when we thought him shamming."

On the 23rd of April they started, Burke first burying in the *cache*, along with Wills's journal and his own notes, a brief statement of their return and the route they had taken, saying they had gone to Mount Hopeless because the camels could not travel, and they could not walk. At first travelling was pleasant enough—water was plentiful, the river was full of fish and covered with wildfowl, and the blacks were friendly, frequently presenting them with fish, rats, and the flour they made from the seed of a clover-like plant which they called the nardoo. But troubles soon began. The camels were weak and emaciated, and could hardly drag themselves along, so that day by day something was left behind buried in the sand. First one camel was bogged and had to be killed, and his flesh dried for food; and from this time forth Wills's journal is one long record of suffering and misfortune, all borne so resignedly—nay, so cheerfully—that we are filled with pity for the man who wrote it. At last the channel they had followed down for so long lost itself in the sand, their last camel died, and they turned back, to start again down another channel which promised better. Weary as they were, it was useless to attempt to carry much baggage, and again and again they paused and buried something, though it seemed like cutting themselves off from all hope to leave so much in the hungry sand. Still they toiled on, Wills continuing to make notes, and noticing again and again the keen, chilly winds of the morning and evening. Blanks of a week at a time occur in the diary, and we learn that this was caused by the scantiness of their provisions, which compelled them to live on the nardoo, and the gathering, pounding, and cleaning of this tiny seed in their inexperienced hands took up all their time. Then, the water failing, they turned back, and gave up all hope of reaching Mount Hopeless, just when they were within fifty miles of it; if they had only held on for another day, they would have seen it rising above the horizon. Surely the stars in their courses fought against the unfortunate men.

Wills made his way wearily back to the depôt, where Brahé and Wright had been but a short time before. To him it seemed unchanged, even as the other two had failed to notice signs that the *cache* had been opened, and he deposited in it another notice of their desperate condition, and an earnest prayer for help. He would hardly have reached the depôt had it not been for the kindly aid of the blacks, and the return journey was ten times worse, for he was so weary, so worn by sickness and famine, that he could hardly drag himself along. Two days he spent in the bush, and then he reached the blacks' camp, only (to his disappointment) to find they had gone, and he sat down by the deserted camp-fires and endeavoured to make a meal of the fish-bones they had left behind them. A little farther on he found two dead fish in a water-hole, and remarks, with pathetic cheerfulness, "that a certain amount of good luck always stuck to him;" and the next day he again fell in with the blacks, who, according to their custom, fed and hospitably entertained him. When he rejoined his companions, he proposed they should join the tribe and live with them, and, as it seemed their

only hope of life now, they agreed, but so enfeebled and weak were they that by the time the camp was reached the blacks had again moved on. It was a bitter disappointment. They were far too weak to think of following, so they took possession of one of the wurleys, which was merely a break-wind of boughs, open probably to the east, and tried to live on nardoo.

The daily records now became shorter and shorter, the unfortunate men weaker and weaker. Wills stayed in the wurley and cleaned the seed till he was almost too weak to blow the husks out of the little trough they used to pound it in; still he notes the changes in the clouds, and watches the wind and the weather. Frequently he notices how cold the tranquil nights are; and at last (June 21st) he writes pitifully that he is weaker than ever, and, unless relief comes, cannot last more than a fortnight. The cold, he says, shrivelled him up, but still he lay without complaining, slowly dying, but always patient, kindly, and thoughtful for the other two. Indeed, it must have been a pitiful and harrowing sight even for those whose condition was but little better. Errors creep into his diary, and the dates are all wrong. Burke was a little stronger, and King, though ill, better than either; so at length, as a last resource, they proposed to go in search of the blacks. The only difficulty was the leaving of Wills, who could now hardly raise himself from his rough bed of boughs. But the prospect satisfied and even pleased him, as holding out a faint chance of escape. The day before they left, he wrote in his note-book:—"I am weaker than ever. . . . Nothing now but the greatest good luck can save any of us; and as for myself, I may live four or five days if the weather continues warm. My pulse is at 48 and very weak, and my legs and arms are nearly skin and bone. I can only look out (like Mr. Micawber) for something to turn up; but starvation on nardoo is by no means very unpleasant but for the weakness one feels, and the utter inability to move oneself; and as far as appetite is concerned, it gives me the greatest satisfaction. Certainly fat and sugar would be more to one's taste."

King and Burke provided him with nardoo and wood and water to last eight days, and then they said farewell. He seems, spite of his cheerfulness, to have despaired of ever seeing them again, for his journals and note-book were buried near the hut, and he gave Burke his watch and a letter for his father, asking King, in case he survived Burke, to see his last wishes fulfilled. Then they left him alone to his fate, and beyond that we know nothing. His papers were buried—he could write no more; he could only lie in the corner of the wurley and watch the day slowly fade into the cold night he dreaded so, and the stars again pale before the dawn. How many days he lay there watching and waiting we cannot say, probably not more than three; and then death came to the lonely man, and he died nobly and bravely, as he had lived. There are many pitiful tales in Australian exploration—many tales of want and suffering and pain bravely borne, but the most pathetic story of all is that of the sufferings and death of the young explorer, William John Wills.

Poor Burke did not long survive the parting. The first day he managed to drag himself along, but on the second he flung away everything, lay down under a bush, and telling King he was convinced he could not last many hours, asked him to stay

by him till the end, as it was a comfort to know someone was by. The next morning he was dead, and King left him (according to his wish) lying unburied on the ground, with a pistol in his right hand. Thus sadly ended the lives of the two brave men who first crossed the continent from sea to sea. After Burke's death, King returned to the wurley where he had left Wills, and finding him also dead, managed, weak though he was, to scrape a hole in the sand, and bury his friend and master. Then, after several days' wandering, he fell in with the blacks, who received him hospitably, as

BURIAL OF BURKE BY HOWITT'S PARTY.

usual, but were by no means anxious to keep him. However, as he proved himself of use, they allowed him to remain; and it was with them he was found by Mr. Howitt in the following September, weak and emaciated, the very shadow of humanity, and almost unable to tell his pitiful story—the last of the ill-fated four who crossed the continent. "King has behaved nobly," wrote poor Burke more than once: and the last note his dying hand traced began "King has behaved nobly."

The appointment of Wright was a grave mistake. He seems to have been an utterly unprincipled man, and so ignorant that he could barely write his own name. Burke had left strict orders that he was to be followed up at once, yet he frittered away his time and resources, never leaving the Darling till three months after Burke,

though there can be no doubt that his leader expected him in a week, or a fortnight at the very least. When he did so, it was of course the very height of summer, the water which had served Burke was dried up, much time was spent in seeking fresh, and before it was found Dr. Beckler and three of the men were suffering so severely from scurvy as to prevent their going further; besides which, Wright declared, the blacks were so hostile he dared not proceed with a weakened party. By the end of April they had only arrived within eighty miles of Cooper's Creek, and while camped there, to their surprise, they were joined by Brahé and his party, who told them that Burke had left for Carpentaria over four months before, and had not then returned.

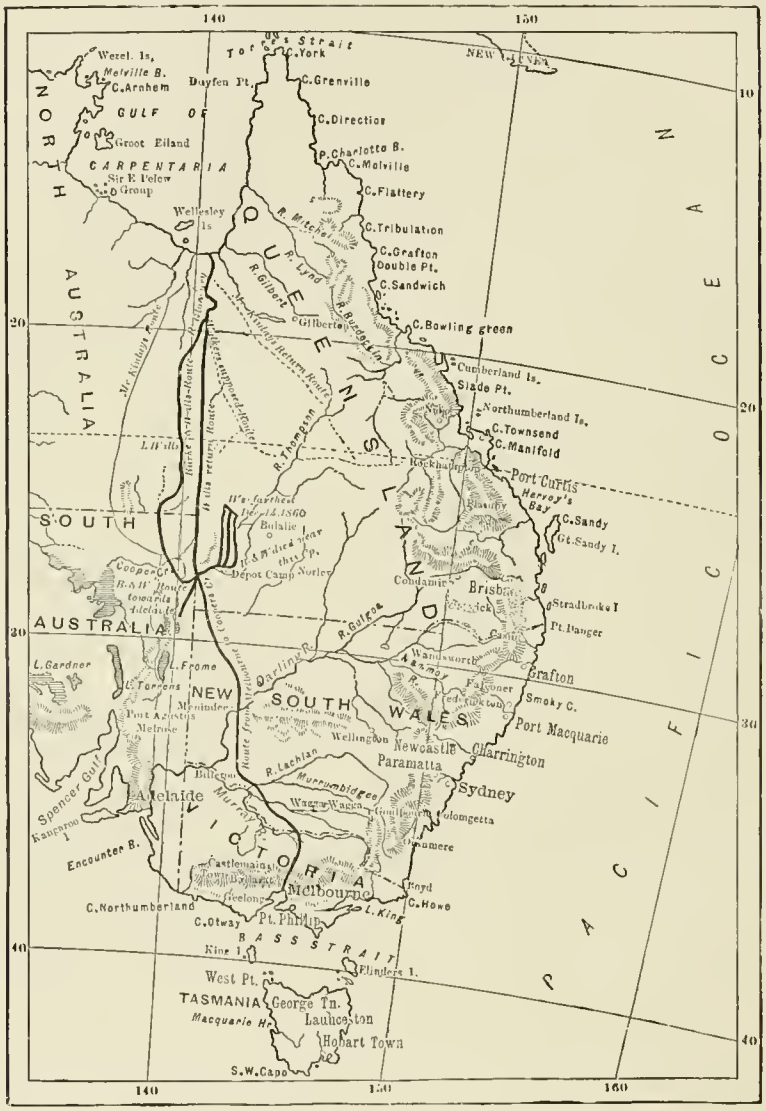
Brahé has been censured for leaving the depôt, but after all he was less to blame than his leader. He was but a working-man, never intended to hold any position in the expedition. Burke had left, taking provisions nominally for three months, but as a matter of fact they were very little more than half-rations for that time; and as he had not returned when four months had passed away, we cannot wonder that Brahé fancied the explorers had perished in the desert. His men were ill with scurvy, one of them died before they reached the Darling, and apparently he had been abandoned by Wright, for Burke had accomplished the journey from the Darling in three weeks, and six months elapsed before Brahé left Cooper's Creek; and he did what, in his eyes, seemed best for the men under his charge, namely, returned towards Menindie. One grave mistake he did indeed make, but that we have already commented on. When he fell in with Wright, he found that party in but little better condition than his own. Though they had been out a much shorter time all were ill, two of the men had died, and that evening Dr. Beckler, surgeon of the expedition, also died. Wright resolved to return to Menindie as soon as possible, but first he and Brahé made a dash across country to Cooper's Creek, arriving at the depôt on the 8th May, only to find it, as they thought, in exactly the same condition as Brahé had left it. They do not however, appear to have stayed more than a quarter of an hour, and King declared that had they used their eyes they *must* have seen that the place had been disturbed, for the unfortunate explorers had left many traces of their presence on purpose. However that may be, Wright and his men returned with all haste to the Darling.

Soon the story of the disastrous ending of the great Victorian expedition spread through the land. The leaders were lost—starving, dying, dead, perhaps—somewhere between Cooper's Creek and the Northern Sea, and at once, from all the colonies, came proffers of assistance. Stuart was away in the centre of the continent, but the South Australian Government at once despatched Mr. John McKinlay, with ample supplies, to search the continent from south to north. From the northern settlements of Queensland went another expedition under a Mr. Walker. Captain Norman, in the *Victoria*, was sent to the Gulf of Carpentaria, and with him went an expedition under William Landsborough, which was to search down the Albert River. That made the fourth, while another, under the able guidance of Mr. Alfred Howitt, was fitted out from the remnants of Burke's expedition, and was to follow, as far as possible, in Burke's footsteps. Mr. Howitt was an able bushman, and the work could not have been placed in more capable hands. He made straight for Cooper's Creek, arriving

there on the 13th September, and was told by Brahé, whom he had with him, that everything was exactly as he left it, and he proceeded therefore to trace down the creek, finding, to his astonishment, many signs of the presence of horses and camels where Brahé assured him none had ever been. The blacks were friendly and numerous, and two days later he came upon King, seated in a wurley they had made him, wasted and worn to a shadow. From him he learned the melancholy fate of Burke and Wills, and, having found their bodies, buried them under marked trees, and over their graves placed branches, that the blacks might understand by their own tokens not to disturb the rest of a fellow-being. These blacks Howitt amply rewarded, and then, as soon as King could travel, he returned to Melbourne, bearing with him the field-books and journals and all that remained of the expedition, reaching the Darling without the loss of a single man, horse, or camel. But his work was not yet done. Once more he crossed the now well-trodden ground, and brought down the bodies of the explorers, in order that they might receive a public funeral in Melbourne.

Before McKinlay's party, the South Australian Relief Expedition, was much beyond the settled districts, the news of Howitt's success was received. McKinlay accordingly determined to explore north, and choosing a route a little to the west of Sturt's old course, soon found himself in a world of lakes; full or dry, sweet or salt, on all sides were lakes and flooded flats, and the beasts of the expedition rejoiced in the luxuriant grass. The weather was hot and dry, and the leader kept his party by the waters till rain should enable him to cross Sturt's Stony Desert. It was weary waiting, but the rain came at last, and they pushed forward, finding certainly many square miles of loose red sand, but hardly any country that could be called desert, for everywhere was water, the blacks were numerous, and were strong, active, healthy-looking men, the birds were not to be numbered, and everywhere was grass in plenty. In fact, a greater contrast than his description of the country and Sturt's we can hardly conceive. Sturt nearly died in a parched and barren desert, while on McKinlay, after but a day or two's experience of the desert which had nearly broken the older explorer's heart, came down such floods that the whole place looked like one vast sea, and the explorers narrowly escaped being surrounded and drowned in the waters. Once free from the floods, their journey presents little variety. Till they reached the tropics it was always either over boggy or stony ground, and neither was pleasant travelling, but once within the torrid zone the country was fresher and greener, and they did not suffer much from want of water. In May, 1862, McKinlay found himself on the Leichhardt River, in country that had already been explored, and soon reached the dense mangrove swamp at the mouth of that river, which barred his way to the open sea. Thus he, too, had successfully crossed the continent from sea to sea, and might well have been proud of his achievement. He seems, however, to have taken matters very coolly; there is neither exultation nor anxiety traceable in his journal, though there is certainly room for both, for before they turned on their homeward route they had killed their last sheep and eaten up their last mouthful of flour, and were wholly dependent for existence on their beasts of burden—the bullocks, camels, and horses. For this

very good reason McKinlay made for the outer settlements of Queensland, and arrived in August at an out-station on the Burdekin River without the loss of a single man, having eaten up on the way their bullocks, camels, and all the horses but two.



MAP SHOWING ROUTE OF BURKE AND WILLS.

While South Australia was searching for Burke from the south, Captain Norman in the *Victoria*, with the Queensland expedition under William Landsborough, was searching from the north. In September the *Victoria* reached the gulf, and Landsborough's party being landed, he commenced the search to the south-west, and traced up the Albert River and its tributaries. He found, however, no traces of

Burke, and water being scarce and the blacks hostile, he returned to the *Victoria*, and, procuring a fresh supply of provisions, started in February, 1862, from the Flinders River.

The party consisted of three white and three black men; and their leader, thorough bushman as he was, had little fear but that he could cross the continent easily. Everywhere he found water and well-grassed country, and at last found himself on Cooper's Creek, which, to his astonishment, he found flowing through excellent country, very different from what Sturt had found it. The blacks were friendly and numerous; with very little difficulty he found a new and better track than Burke's to the Darling, and by the end of June the explorer was in Melbourne, and told himself of the success of his journey and the rapid manner in which he had crossed the continent.

JOHN KING.

Walker, too, was engaged in the search, and he, with a party of native police, started from Rockhampton, crossed Queensland to the headwaters of Cooper's Creek, and then, turning north, crossed the water-shed and came down the Flinders River, following most carefully the tracks of Burke. At last, however, he lost them, and came to the not unnatural conclusion that that explorer had been killed by the myall blacks. He thought this very probable, because he himself was opposed by them at every turn, and on one occasion in a skirmish no less than twelve were shot before they were driven off. Perhaps this hostility in a place where Burke and Wills, two lonely men, had passed and re-passed unmolested, was occasioned by the presence of Walker's native police, for it is well known that these troopers are dreaded by the blacks far more than they fear a white man.

On the 7th December, 1861, they reached the depôt which Captain Norman had formed at the mouth of the Albert, where they were received with joy, as being the first who brought any tidings of Burke. All attempts to find the return route of that explorer failed, and Walker had a terrible journey back to the east, which, however, was not without its reward, for he and Landsborough between them satisfactorily marked the line of the water-shed between the northern and the southern waters, which had so puzzled Mitchell and had cost Leichhardt his life. This, the last of the relief expeditions, showed again how much can be done in

Australian exploration with but little means if only the leader be a man experienced in bush-life. Walker and his black troopers ran out of almost everything which we are accustomed to consider a necessary of life, but still they held on, and arrived at the out-stations of Queensland not much the worse for their terrible journey.

The year 1862 was remarkable in the annals of exploration. Walker, Landsborough, and McKinlay all made successful explorations; all had news to tell. Stuart, too, started out in January of that year, and made as straight as want of water would allow him to his furthest northern point of the preceding year. Once there, his journal is one record of a weary search for water; but at last, having found it, he made a desperate push northwards, and one day in July stood gazing out on the Indian Ocean, not far from what is now Port Darwin and the settlement of Palmerston, having accomplished successfully what had been the aim and object of his life for the last few years. Then, after washing his hands and dipping his feet in the blue waters, to make his crossing complete, he turned homewards, arriving in Adelaide in December, 1862, half-dead with scurvy.

MONUMENT TO BURKE AND WILLS

LITHGOW TO BOURKE.

Mudgee—Tarana—The Fish River—Orange—The Public Buildings—Wellington—The Caves—Dubbo—Bourke.

WHEN the Great Western line reaches Lithgow it has left the Blue Mountains behind it. The Blue Mountains are the home of the picturesque, and Lithgow (as has been said in an earlier article) is not picturesque. Lithgow aspires to be the Wolverhampton of Australia, and the best friends of Wolverhampton do not regard it as beautiful. Lithgow has coal mines, smelts iron and copper, is rather good in rough pottery, plumes itself on its bricks, especially its fire-bricks. All this makes Lithgow a capital place for money-making. It is perfectly certain to grow, and probably to grow rich—also to grow black. It has a brisk and lively air, but when the train reaches Lithgow passengers know with certainty that the picturesque part of their journey is over.

A little beyond, at Wallerawang (name of a squatter's station before it was given to a railway station), a line branches off northwards to Mudgee. This name is thoroughly aboriginal, and the town enjoys many advantages. Mudgee wool has borne a great reputation in the wool markets, and the country round the town is as good for farmers as for squatters. Also it is as rich in gold as it is suited for wool and agricultural produce. It had a magnificent time in the alluvial days, but is not to be dethroned now that alluvial digging has, through exhaustion, to make way for quartz-reefing. Moreover, Mudgee is rich in minerals other than gold. It has iron ore, coal, and slate, and now that Mudgee is connected with Sydney by rail, Mudgee will forge ahead still more rapidly than in the past.

A station or two beyond Wallerawang Junction is Tarana (in pronouncing, accent the final syllable). This is the generally-accepted place from which to start for the Fish River Caves. That it will not always be so is quite evident when, after looking at a map, we recognise the circuitous nature of a journey from Sydney by way of Tarana. Of Tarana itself nothing more need be said. The station before Bathurst enjoys the Scotch border name of Kelso, but the Scotch are not specially strong in this Kelso. The English church here is already invested with an air of antiquity. The place is practically a suburb of Bathurst, with which town it is connected by a substantial bridge over the Macquarie.

This mention of the Macquarie suggests comment on the frequency with which certain names repeat themselves in Australian geography, as must have been noticed by the readers of this and the previous volumes. In some rough but vigorous verses Dr. Lang sharply satirised many years ago this weakness of Governor Macquarie for bestowing his Christian or his surname on as many places as possible.

Dr. Lang has collected a characteristic batch of native names, some now very

familiar and some as unfamiliar as ever. The native name of the Macquarie was Wambool, a name which might well have been retained. Here are the lines:—

"'Twas said of Greece two thousand years ago
That every stone in the land had got a name;
Of New South Wales, too, men will say so,
But every stone there seems to get the same.
'Macquarie' for a name is all the go—
The old Scotch Governor was fond of fame—
Macquarie Street, Place, Fort, Port, Town, Lake, River,
'Lachlan Macquarie, Esquire, Governor,' for ever.

ANSON STREET, ORANGE.

"I like the native names as Parramatta,
And Illawarra and Woolloomooloo,
Nandowra, Woogarova, Bulkomatta,
Tomah, Toongabbie, Mittagong, Meroo,
Buckobble, Cumleroy, and Coolingatta,
The Warragnmby, Bargo, Burradoo,
Cookbundoon, Carrabarga, Wingecarribbee,
The Wollondilly, Yurumbon, Bungarribbee.

I hate your Goulburn Downs and Goulburn Plains,
And Goulburn River, and the Goulburn Range,
And Mount Goulburn, and Goulburn Vale; one's brains
Are turned with Goulburns, vile scorbutic mange
For immortality! Had I the reins
Of Government a fortnight, I would change
These Downing Street appellatives, and give
The country names that should deserve to live."

Starting a little further south the Lachlan (the river with the Scotch Governor's Christian name) travels nearly due west, then drops a little to the south and falls into the Murray. The Macquarie (the river with the Governor's surname) goes nearly due north from Bathurst and joins the Darling. The line to Bourke runs alongside of it part of the way and crosses it at various places. Nearer the mountains the traveller has made an earlier acquaintance with a stream which is practically the Macquarie. It is there known as the Fish River, and is the stream that the line has been crossing frequently on each side of Tarana. The caves now known as the Jenolan used by

SUMMER STREET, ORANGE.

a curious mistake to be known as the Fish River. Early visitors from Bathurst travelled up the Fish River or Fish Creek to reach the caves, and did not notice that they had crossed a mountain-range before attaining their goal. The cool and refreshing stream that passes through the caves, dear to the tourist, dear especially to the bather—

> "Here, the pride of the plunger, you stride the fall and clear it;
> Here, the delight of the bather, you roll in beaded sparklings;
> Here, into pure green depth drop down from lofty ledges"—

flows into the Cox, and so ultimately into the Hawkesbury. The disadvantage of the wrong name—Fish River Caves—is shown in a tale of what happened nearly twenty years ago. A young man from Bathurst lost his party near the caves, but remembering the name, and knowing that the Fish River would lead him to the

Macquarie he determined to follow the stream. He started cheerily enough on horseback with swag and billy, but he abandoned first his horse, and then his saddle, and then his swag—kept nature alive upon boiled nettles; and after about three weeks, emaciated and at the last gasp, he came down upon the Sydney side of the Blue Mountains, fortunately just as a smith—who once a month travelled by that way — happened to be passing.

THE WEIGHBRIDGE, ORANGE.

The distance between Bathurst and Orange is about fifty miles by rail—and nearly half-way between the two stands Blayney. Round about the little town are squatters' stations, and close to it there is gold digging and gold mining. Blayney has a future, for it is proposed to make this place the point of departure for a branch line to join the Great Western and the Great Southern lines. The point of junction with the latter will be Murrumburrah. This is to be a loop line to enable communication between Bourke on the one side, Melbourne and Adelaide on the other, without twice crossing the mountain wall to Sydney and out again.

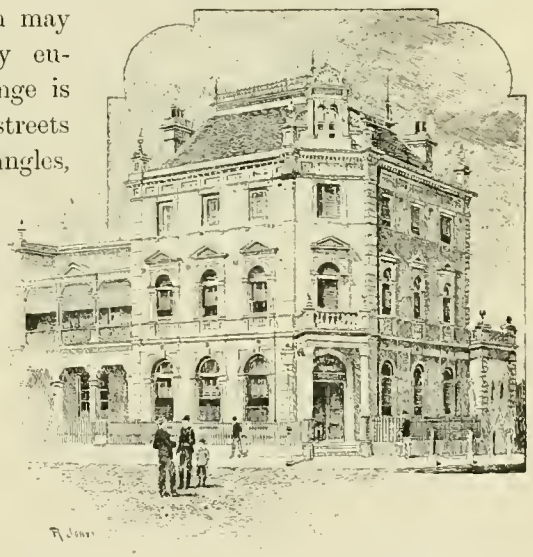
By this new line the journey from Melbourne to any place beyond Blayney will be shortened by no less than 375 miles. This represents to the traveller a gain of nearly fifteen hours' actual travelling, besides the delay in Sydney. We must also reflect what a gain it will be in the matter of sheep and cattle who do not travel by express. The longer they remain in the trucks the more meat is taken off them, and this diminution of size and deterioration in condition represents a money loss to the owner, not to mention the suffering to the animals, or the satisfaction of the consumer at the dinner-table.

Carcoar and Cowra towards the northern end, and Young towards the southern, will be supplied by this new loop line. Both the former are goldfield towns, and each of them is the centre of an agricultural district. Carcoar, situated in a hilly country, on the little River Belabula, an affluent of the Lachlan, is described as specially well adapted for the cultivation of English fruits. Cowra is on the Lachlan itself, and is proud of its bridge over that river. Being on the river has its drawbacks as well as its advantages. Some seventeen years ago the whole township was nearly swept away by a flood, but the new buildings have been erected on higher ground, and have greater stability. Cowra is longing for its railway communication. At present it sends forth an average of five coaches a day. The population of the town is about two thousand; of the district, perhaps three times as many; and there is little doubt that the railway will help town and district forward. The country round Cowra ranks

highest in New South Wales for its production of grain. Free selectors are doing well, and the ground is good for the cultivation of fruit and of the vine. Young is a pleasant little town, the centre of a very thriving district. At one time the diggings were very important: now wheat and crops form the strong point of a district which is one of the best in the colony for fruitfulness. The loop line has been begun at both ends, and Young is already provided with its line southwards.

Orange is nearly two hundred miles from Sydney, and seems first to have been settled about 1850. No explanation is to be found for the name—not even the oldest inhabitant knows the reason for it. If the name had been fixed after the discovery of gold, possibly the first syllable (the French for gold) might point to the origin. Ophir (no doubt about that name), where gold was first discovered in Australia, is not far off—sixteen miles. Speculation wavers between the fruit that Andrew Marvell compares to "golden lamps in a green night," and the little town with magnificent Roman remains in the south-east of France which, strangely enough, gave its name to an English royal house, and, through affection for William the Third, to a certain violent type of Protestantism.

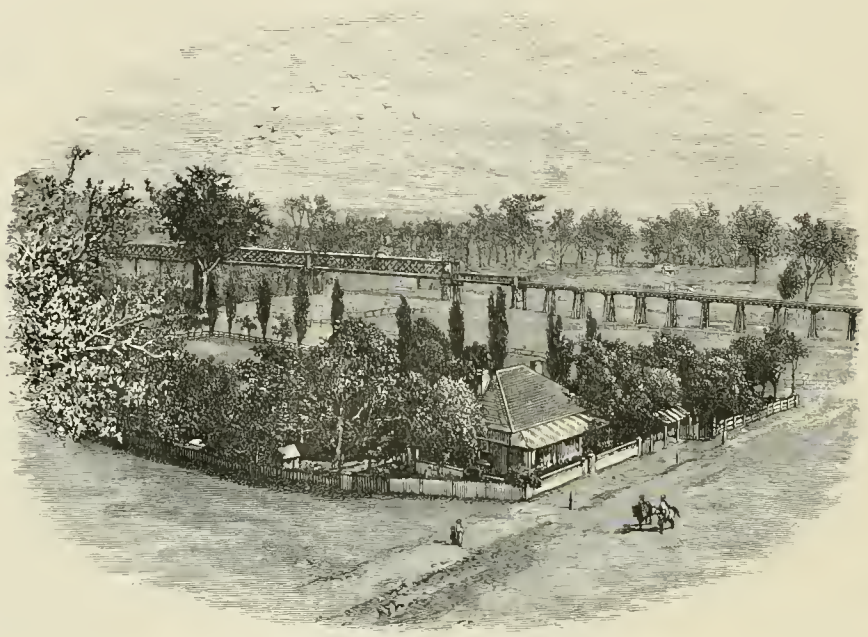
The town of Orange is pleasantly placed some 2,800 feet above the sea-level, in undulating country, and contains about three thousand souls; whilst the number of inhabitants in the electoral district is three times as large. The little creek on which the town may be said to be situated bears the not very euphonious name of Blackman's Swamp. Orange is on the plan of most Australian towns, the streets being wide, and for the most part at right angles, one set to the other. A few trees have been planted in the chief streets, but as yet they make but little show, for the wise policy of street-planting has only recently been adopted. There are no public gardens in the usual sense of the word, though a small area of land known as Robertson's Park has been planted with shady trees. No walks, however, have been laid out, nor are there any seats or other accommodations to make the ground suitable for public enjoyment. In the upper part of the town there is a larger area which has been properly laid out, but it is not much frequented.



THE AUSTRALIAN JOINT-STOCK BANK, DUBBO.

There are the usual public buildings, including the churches of various denominations, banks, post-office, a very convenient court-house, and several halls. A town-hall will shortly be added, as the town is governed by a corporation, mayor, and aldermen. The only water-supply is that of wells, but a water-scheme has been prepared and

sites chosen. The district is of an undulating character, gradually rising towards the Canobalas, a range of hills forming the highest ground. The land is generally of a good agricultural character, though in several places it is more suited for pastoral purposes. Gold is found in almost every direction. In places the indications give promise of large deposits at some depth below the surface. Mining has hitherto been only moderately supported in the neighbourhood, but if sufficient capital were available, and properly expended, the industry would become of leading importance in the colony. In the days of the diggings Ophir had its thousands of inhabitants. Now it has hardly ten for every thousand it then had. The chief industry of the town is milling; the others



THE VICTORIA RAILWAY BRIDGE, DUBBO.

are not important, though they comprise two breweries and gasworks. The climate is healthy, being cool and bracing in summer, though rather cold and wet in the winter.

From Orange (or rather from two miles beyond Orange) starts a railway line to the west, which looks as if it meant to reach Wilcannia on the Darling. No doubt some day it will, but the whole distance is at least 390 miles, and at present this branch line only goes as far as Molong, twenty-four miles of the way. Molong is itself rather an important little place, besides enjoying the large traffic which is brought to it by being the terminus of the line. It has steam flour-mills and steam saw-mills, but its mineral wealth makes its reputation. Its future wealth lies in coal and copper.

From Lithgow to Bathurst the line descended some eight hundred and fifty feet, but at Orange it has gained seven hundred of these again. Orange is on the table-land that is connected with the mountain ranges behind it. Some dozen miles beyond

Orange the line begins to descend rapidly on to the great plains of the interior (eight hundred feet in fourteen miles), and all the way onward there is a pretty constant descent, though not quite so rapid as this until the plain-country is reached. Ironbarks, a station between Orange and Wellington, was once the scene of flourishing diggings, and the land all round has the peculiar turned-up appearance of a deserted goldfield. Readers of "The Golden Butterfly" will remember the description of Empire City with which it opens. There are many Empire Cities in Australia.

The traveller is prepared for Wellington, one of the many places called after the Iron Duke, by coming upon a station with the name of Apsley just before reaching it. In the same connection, too, it may be mentioned that the most striking natural feature

THE DARLING IN FLOOD AT BOURKE.

of the neighbourhood is a fine hill called Mount Arthur. This the tourist climbs for the sake of its views. As early as 1823 the first settlement was made at Wellington, with Lieutenant Percy Simpson as commandant. The place is about two hundred and fifty miles from Sydney, and is well situated on the Macquarie, where it is joined by the Bell River, nestling under some well-wooded hills. It was, of course, the advantageous position on the river that led to its early settlement. In the rivers the angler will find plenty of fish. Immediately round the town is a good deal of cultivated land; further afield the country is pastoral. Wellington is especially proud of the Victoria Railway Bridge, and it is certainly a bridge to be proud of, being 650 feet long, and 70 feet above the level of the river. From Mudgee to Wellington is not far as the crow flies—less than forty miles, but it is an enormous distance by rail. The Cudgegong (the little river on which Mudgee lies) falls into the Macquarie a little above the town of Wellington.

But the great sight of the neighbourhood of Wellington is the caves, some six

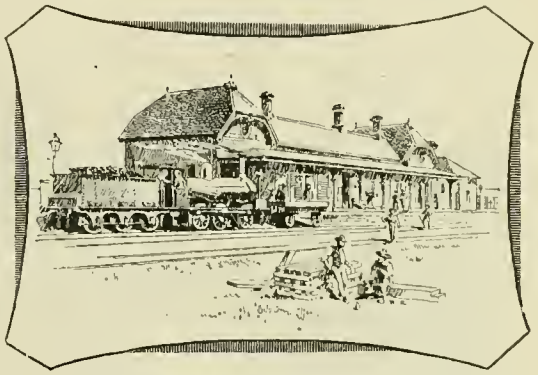
miles from the town. With respect to these, here is an extract from the local guide-book:—"The Wellington Caves have always had a large amount of interest attached to them, not only on account of their natural beauty and peculiarity, but because of the strange remains of a bygone time that every exploration of their depths brings to light. Remains of men have been found there, and strange tools and weapons; grotesque drawings, indicating a poetic conception and stirring times, tell of a people who have passed away as entirely as has the time in which they lived. Save the deeply-graven lines on the face of the rock, the strange and petrified forms of tools and utensils for household use, the footprints of ages ago firmly fixed in a clay that has long since turned into rock, no record remains of the people or the period when the Wellington Caves were places of common resort, either for purposes of security or comfort." Not far from Wellington also are certain trees which were used as sepulchral monuments and carved by the blacks. These trees stand some twenty yards apart, and the body, probably of a chief, was buried between them.

At Wellington the traveller, though he has been over twelve hours in the train, has not come half-way from Sydney to Bourke; but of the remainder of the journey there is much less to be said. Between Wellington and Dubbo there are several varieties of country. At one place enormous wheat-fields, at another forests of trees (which are rapidly being converted into sleepers for the railways), and then large tracts of country entirely devoted to sheep. Like many of these towns that lie along the Great Western line, Dubbo seems to be first a mineral centre, and then agricultural, and then pastoral. The mineral is generally gold, and Dubbo has a large auriferous district around it; but the neighbourhood is even stronger in coal and in copper. We may be quite sure that there is a future for any district that has a good coal seam. Round about Dubbo are many free selectors, and it has been found that, besides wheat and oats, the soil is excellent for the cultivation of the vine. This discovery naturally led to selection, and brought farmers. Then, again, Dubbo is in a central situation for the wool-trade. The wool is brought by drays from stations, especially those on the Castlereagh River, to Dubbo, and there the bales are loaded on trucks for Sydney. Dubbo enjoys two bridges over the Macquarie—a wooden bridge for horse-traffic, and a very fine railway-bridge. Indeed, the town is well provided with the luxuries of civilisation—large hotels and stores, a commodious stone gaol and a court-house, many churches (of which the one with the tall spire belongs to the Roman Catholics), schools of divers kinds, a library at the School of Arts. The railway-station, too, is considered a model of convenience.

From Dubbo to Bourke is a long run, and there is very little to be said about the country. The distance is 225 miles, and it takes the mail-train eight hours and a half. The line runs through level country, and there are very few inhabitants, unless sheep be counted. The 278 miles from Sydney required seventy-one stations, or say a station to every four miles; the remaining distance has only eleven stations, or a station to every twenty. Of these stations two have very typical names—Nevertire, indicative of the feebleness of invention on the part of the English settler, and Mullengudgery, a characteristic aboriginal name. Nyngan is a station whence it is proposed

some day to run a branch line to Cobar, a remarkable town, which owes its existence to copper-mines. Considering its distance from Sydney, and the expense of bringing everything that has to come from the seaboard, and that it is eighty miles from a railway-station, Cobar is a large place. The Great Cobar Mine in its best days employed over seven hundred men, but copper has not been fetching a good price in the markets of the world, and carriage is very expensive, especially for heavy minerals. There is little wonder that Cobar should be anxious for its railway; without it the town runs imminent risk of collapsing altogether.

Bourke is the furthest point yet reached by any Australian railway from the coast, and furthest therefore from civilisation. Yet visitors to Bourke are much surprised at the advanced stage that Bourke—over five hundred miles from Sydney—has reached. "As comfortable an hotel," quoth one, "as any you could find in Melbourne." The streets are well laid out, and Bourke seems a well-governed municipality. Here, however—and with this our article may close—is a little account from the pen of one who knows all about it—Mr. J. L. Parsons, editor of the *Central Australian* (what a characteristic name for a newspaper, by the way—the *Central Australian!*):—



RAILWAY STATION AT DUBBO.

Bourke, the centre of a large district wholly pastoral, is situated on the south-east bank of the Darling, and is 503 miles (by the railway) north-west of Sydney. It was surveyed for a township in 1861, and the first sale took place in 1862, when allotments were sold at the upset price of £4 that have since realised £2,500. The site of Bourke is where Sir Thomas Mitchell in 1835 first struck the Darling, the native name of the point of the river being "Worturmurtie," but called by Mitchell the "Eighteen-mile Point," being eighteen miles distant from his previous camp on the Bogan, which watercourse he still thought he was following down. At about six miles below the present site of Bourke Sir Thomas Mitchell erected a stockade or log fort, as a protection against the blacks for some of his party, which he left there while, with the remainder, he proceeded down the river. This fort he called Fort Bourke, after Governor Sir Richard Bourke. Some twenty years later the country on the opposite side of the river was taken up for a cattle-station, and the run was named Fort Bourke, the native name being "Nulty-Nulty;" and the site of the head-station was fixed about eight miles below Fort Bourke, and fourteen below the present town of Bourke. In 1860 the station passed into the hands of the Bogan River Company, and became the headquarters of the first Commissioner of Crown Lands for the Warrego district, and a weekly horse mail-service was started by way of Walgett, a distance of 170 miles, Fort Bourke being constituted a post-office. On the survey of the township the name of Bourke was given to it, but for many years it was best known under the name of

Fort Bourke. In September, 1885, the railway from Sydney to Bourke was completed, and the population had increased to about two thousand.

Bourke, being situated in the centre of the valley of the Darling, is liable to heavy floods. In 1864 the present site of the town was from three to five feet under water, and the valley of the Darling for over five hundred miles in length was an inland fresh-water lake, varying from ten to twenty miles in breadth. The line of railway on leaving Bourke passes through twelve miles of flooded or "black" country, when it enters the "red" or Mulga country, undulating and gradually rising about four hundred

THE DARLING IN DROUGHT NEAR BOURKE.

feet in eighty miles. The railway-stations between Bourke and Nyngan are Mooculta (20 miles), Byerock (48 miles), Glenariff (62 miles), Coolabah (77 miles), Girilambone (98 miles), Nyngan (125 miles).

The Bogan, a watercourse often partially dry, enters the Darling about twenty-eight miles above Bourke on the south-east side of the river, while the Culgoa, which rises in Queensland, and is there called the Condamine, and which is sometimes partially dry, enters the Darling on the north-west side, about twenty-five miles above Bourke. Previous to the completion of the railway, all the traffic from the Bourke district went by the river to Adelaide when the stream was navigable, or up the Bogan by drays, *viâ* Orange and Bathurst, to Sydney, sometimes occupying from four to six months in transit.

At about three miles above Bourke, on the north-west bank of the Darling, is the village of North Bourke, which is situated on an isolated spot of high red ground

above flood-mark, and the traffic from Bourke northwards passes through it, the Darling being crossed at North Bourke by a bridge, the estimated cost of which, with approaches, was about £80,000. The Bourke terminus is the largest fat-stock trucking-dépôt in Australia, the Metropolitan Market being very largely supplied through this channel, all the fat stock from South-Western Queensland coming to market *viâ* Bourke. There is an Episcopalian and a Roman Catholic church, as well as a large Presbyterian congregation; a public school, as well as a Roman Catholic and other private schools; and numerous stores and hotels. A district court judge holds district courts and criminal sessions three times a year. Bourke is a municipality, having a mayor and nine aldermen to guide its destinies. Waterworks for the supply of the town have lately been taken over by the municipality. The navigation of the Darling is very irregular but it is navigable for a shorter or longer period in most years.

END OF VOL. III.

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